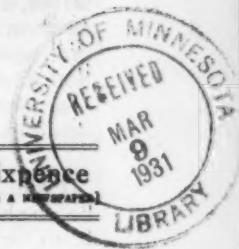


THE SATURDAY REVIEW

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CONTENTS

NOTES OF THE WEEK	253
LEADING ARTICLES :	
The Incompetence of Mr. Snowden	256
Too Young at Fifty?	256
MIDDLE ARTICLES :	
The Problem of Disarmament.	
1—Some General Considerations.	
By Sir Charles Petrie	257
Unemployment Insurance—II.	
By Cyril Martin	259
The Panel Doctor.	260
The Land of Fabulous Treasure.	
By Sir Denison Ross	261
Mental Golf.	
By Leigh D. Brownlee	261
Where the Sun is Shining.	
By S. L. Bensusan	262
A Celestial Incident.	
By Peter Durrant	263
VERSE :	
I Will Not Kiss You.	
By Hugh Longden	258
Out of Town.	
By Elizabeth Tatchell	263
SHORT STORY :	
Lovely Lily.	
By Ursula Bloom	264

WHOM THE CAP FITS—IV.	
By Achates	266
A LETTER FROM OXFORD.	
From Our Own Correspondent	266
THE THEATRE.	
By Gilbert Wakefield	
'Three Flats'	267
PORTRAIT.	
By Frank Slater	
Mr. H. W. Nevinson	268
THE FILMS.	
By Mark Forrest	
'St. Joan — the Maid.'	
'The Devil to Pay'	269
THE "SATURDAY" COMPETITIONS	269
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR	270
CROSS WORD PUZZLE	275
NEW NOVELS.	
By H. C. Harwood	276
REVIEWS :	
Smith of Birkenhead.	
By Claud Mullins	277

Afterthoughts.	
By Osbert Burdett	277
The White Army. The Experiment of Bolshevism.	
By Lancelot Lawton	278
The Case for the Sea-Serpent.	
By Geoffrey West	279
Recollections of a Bulgarian Diplomatist's Wife.	
By H. Charles Woods	279
Death Customs: An Analytical Study of Burial Rites.	
By Frank A. Clement	280
The Englishman and His Books in the Early Nineteenth Century.	
By Vernon Rendall	280
Through the Caucasus to the Volga	281
More Memories and Musings	282
SHORTER NOTICES	282
ART NOTES :	
An Indefatigable Modern.	
By Adrian Bury	284
ACROSTICS	285
THE CITY	286

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NOTES OF THE WEEK

THE House of Commons has agreed in principle to the new vote of twenty million sterling on the dole; and Mr. Snowden's good resolutions of last week have melted, like February snow in a London street, into slush. He regards the financial situation as serious, and he demands sacrifice. But not a sacrifice of anything existing already—merely a postponement of future schemes. No jam to-morrow, but still jam to-day.

A week ago the speech was interpreted to mean that Cabinet Ministers and Parliamentary salaries might be cut by ten per cent.; the saving might have been small, but we should at least

have believed that our politicians were serious—at least up to ten per cent.—when they preached economy. It appears, however, that there is nothing in it, even as a gesture; the show goes on playing to empty houses, but the prices in the stalls are not to be reduced.

The House of Lords has killed the Education Bill, to the simulated indignation of Labour and the private relief of the Government. Sir Charles Trevelyan muddled the negotiations with the vested religious interests all through, he revived strong sectarian feelings which wiser men are anxious to allay, and it was perceived weeks ago that the Bill was an asset rather than a liability. The Government may be left to square the account with the teachers and the Churches.

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King Alfonso has clearly won the first round of his fight with the Left, though the struggle is obviously only in its initial stage, as yet. The anti-monarchical parties, like the Whigs in this country in the days of the Popish Plot, over-reached themselves, and so played into the hands of the Crown. In short, the King of Spain is adopting the attitude that would have saved Louis XVI and Nicholas II both their lives and their thrones had they taken it—a blend of conciliation with firmness in his dealings with his opponents.

From an international point of view there can be no shadow of doubt that this latest development is to be welcomed. By their failure to form a ministry, the politicians of the Left have once more revealed their incompetence, and if by any unhappy chance they ever did attain power, the state of Spain under their administration would very soon resemble that of Russia under Kerensky. The collapse of the central authority would certainly be followed by Communist risings.

It is too early yet to forecast the policy of the new Government in any detail, and it will be mainly concerned for the present with the maintenance of law and order. But it is to be hoped that a new Constitution, more suited to Spain's needs than that of 1876, will before long be drawn up, and when that time comes the project of General Primo de Rivera might well serve as a model. In any event, the last few days have shown that the Crown is the one bulwark against anarchy and any new Constitution must recognize the fact.

Meanwhile, the attitude of France has been, if anything, almost too correct. At the first hint of trouble every Spanish suspect was told to move north of the Loire, and those in Paris have been carefully watched. All very well, no doubt, but it is hardly consistent with the continued presence of anti-Fascists at Nice. Can it be, I wonder, that the French right of asylum is interpreted in one way as regards those who cross the Pyrenees and in another in respect of those who cross the Alps?

If the rumour be true—I can hardly believe it—that Moscow jammed the Papal broadcast, then we are faced with a new species of international sabotage. The Pope's dispute with Mussolini over the Protestant congregations in Italy shows that the Bishop of Rome, as our own stern dissenters call him, has not yet learned the difficult lesson of spiritual tolerance, but this unfortunate episode should go some way to convince everybody that there is as strong a case for tolerance in the ether.

The movement to restrict the liberty of testamentary disposition is long overdue, and it is to be hoped that the Bills now before Parliament, to prevent a man willing all his property away and leaving his wife and children penniless, will pass into law. The moral obligation to entail at least a portion of the family estate on the direct descendants is, of course, recognized by an overwhelming majority of decent citizens, but the occasional exceptions have long been a public scandal, and it is high time that this matter should be attended to.

The death of Sir Laming Worthington-Evans was entirely unexpected, as he had spoken in the House two or three days before, and then showed no sign of fatigue or illness. He was an industrious and efficient member of the Party, who made his name as an accurate master of detail rather than an expounder of great principle. Although he maintained his seat at Colchester in several contested elections, he was not generally popular with his constituents, and when he decided (on the ground of health) to seek salvation at Hanover Square in 1929, the Essex town made no special effort to induce him to reconsider his decision.

Mr. Clynes, who is perhaps the only competent member of the present Cabinet, would, I am sure, agree that Mrs. Clynes is the best wife in the world, and that much of his success in life is due to her. But the best wife in the world may make mistakes, and Mrs. Clynes certainly made a mistake in visiting a woman lying under sentence of death for murder in a London prison.

The popular Press, with its usual idiotic sloppiness where women are concerned—when will Fleet Street realize that women are, after all, human beings, and even rational bipeds on occasion?—sentimentalized over this case, the short point of which was that a woman had murdered one child while she was expecting another. Apart from this slobber in the Sunday papers, there was no particular interest in the case, and no indication whatever that women, and more particularly mothers actual or expectant, had any special feeling in the matter.

But it is the business of the Home Secretary to advise as to the exercise of the royal prerogative in these cases, and it is always a difficult and delicate duty. I do not imagine that the headlines made any difference to Mr. Clynes. But being a good husband, he might be embarrassed if the Home Secretary had to turn a deaf ear to Mrs. Clynes at the dinner-table; and being a good Home Secretary, he might feel awkward if Mrs. Clynes dropped a hint that perhaps it would be better to write to the official authority about it. I am sure that Mrs. Clynes visited Mrs. Wise out of the kindness of her heart. But it would be better not to make this a precedent.

The new Epstein marble 'Genesis' has hardly, I think, had fair treatment from the art critics. Perhaps they were shocked; possibly their training and tradition led them half-unconsciously to expect some conventional piece of female prettiness, some daughter of Eve preening herself in the mirror of creation.

There is nothing of that in the new sculpture: 'Genesis' is the mother of Eve, not her daughter, and this pregnant woman is nearer the orang-utan in poise and figure and feature than she is to her proper children of to-day. She is not beautiful, in the accepted sense of the word, but she is strong; and she conveys,

21 February 1931

too, a slight suggestion of sullenness, as though a little suspicious that some novelty was afoot within, and that the fruit of the body she is clasping was about to leave the accepted simian ways and to strike out a line of its own.

This is no confident maternity of the familiar Madonna type. 'Genesis' is contemplative, with a quiet realization that somehow the future of the stock will be different; and there is a look of puzzlement in the eyes that reminded me somehow of the woman in the 'Mayor of Casterbridge' to whom time and circumstance had given everything except fair play. Was this, too, a foreboding of the future?

When Mr. Lloyd George remarked casually last week that "the City was always wrong" in its attitude to finance and taxation, it was easy to understand, and even to sympathize with, the stately rebukes by the bankers and the, I fear, more sulphurous explosions from that temporarily exhausted volcano, the Stock Exchange. After all, no human being, not even Mr. Garvin in his most portentous prophecies, is always wrong, any more than any human institution (*pace* the Vatican) is always right; and the authorities in the City are probably correct quite as often as the authorities at Westminster.

But the City belief that there is some species of preternatural wisdom indigenous to Threadneedle Street which is not to be found anywhere else, and certainly not in Parliament Street, is, as the schoolboy would say, sheer drip. Admittedly, some of the best brains of the City are now in retreat at Maidstone or Parkhurst—I do not suppose the one square mile attributes the slump entirely to that—but the fact is that the City looks at things from a highly specialized angle, and even from that angle the ordinary man has found out that the City often makes mistakes.

Take, for example, the Waterlow case, more reminiscent, if I may say so, of one of Mr. John Buchan's detective stories than one of the most sober firms and solid Lord Mayors it has ever been my privilege to meet. Take, again, the White Star and R.M.S.P. case only last week, where it was shown that dividends had been paid out of reserves and subsidiaries for years until the capital was exhausted.

The most reckless Socialist could hardly have been more reckless than the directors of these great shipping companies of international reputation and responsibility; but though the auditors appear to have appended notes of dissent, or at least of qualification, to the company's own valuation of its assets, the shareholders appear to have known nothing of what was going on. Are these the gods of the City idolatry?

The B.B.C., as befits an institution of tender years, is often childish, but in its treatment of Mr. Winston Churchill it seems to have descended to the infantile. It refuses him permission

to broadcast, on the ground that only heads of parties can use the microphone, and then only when the party heads reply to them. As those heads never utter anything except meaningless generalities, whereas Mr. Churchill, like Sir O. Mosley, has the pluck to say what he thinks from the wilderness, this simply means that listeners-in are restricted to a diet of political syrup.

Political syrup may or may not be better than the pious uplift and the literary log-rolling which, as I am informed, characterize some of the B.B.C.'s lighter moments. These things, one knows, will happen in the best-regulated places. But it does seem a pity that when a man has something to say worth saying, the B.B.C. should be the one place in the world where he is not allowed to say it. Is Sir John Reith's crest an ostrich, head in sand, except when blather is about?

The Poetry Society, stirred by the current (and indeed recurrent) discussion as to the alleged merits of the National Anthem, is starting an open competition with a prize for additional or alternative verses to the present version. I congratulate the Society on its pluck, but while hoping for the best, they should prepare for the worst; for it is a peculiarity of all attempts to revise "God Save the King" that, bad as is the original, it is usually better than the revised version.

It is an odd thing, which I do not profess to understand, that nearly all patriotic verse is bad. Bar Shakespeare's 'Silver Sea,' Kipling's 'Recessional,' and Rupert Brooke's Sonnets, there is very little consciously patriotic poetry in England; Browning's few lines on Cape St. Vincent might be added to the list, but Tennyson is definitely bad: Alfred Austin, of course, was ridiculous, and Bridges costive. It is very much the same in French and German literature; perhaps the Jewish poets are the only real exception.

MISS BONDFIELD TO MR. SNOWDEN

Let me see if Philip can
Be a little gentleman.
Let me see if he will lend
All the cash I want to spend.
But fidgety Phil, he won't stand still
And back my Parliamentary Bill.
He talks of sacrifice all round
And other silly things that sound
As if he meant them to be taken
In a hurry by the nation.
He doesn't mean it, I am sure—
He's not ashamed to ask for more—
But Philip, I am getting cross.
Just get off your rocking-horse
And pull the strings a little tighter
Till the rich man's pocket's lighter.
When he's broke the game is ended,
But till that time the going's splendid.
Never mind Old England's glories,
Up the dole and down the Tories!

STRUWELPETER, JR.

THE INCOMPETENCE OF MR. SNOWDEN

LAST week's debate in the House of Commons has been more momentous than any that have taken place in that august assembly for several months past, and the reason is not far to seek, for the subject was not one of academic interest like the Trade Disputes Bill or the Alternative Vote, but national economy—a matter that profoundly affects the life of the ordinary citizen. For this reason it is the more unfortunate that its most sensational result has been another slump on the Stock Exchange, though in our opinion of even greater importance is the fact that it has at last revealed to the world the gross incompetence of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Indeed, it must be a long time since a minister has found himself in so peculiar a predicament as that in which Mr. Snowden was last week. He was opposing a motion with which the whole tenor of his speech was in agreement; he alienated, in every statement that he made, those who usually support him; and he was finally contradicted, in none too courteous a manner, by the ally upon whose favour he and his colleagues depend for their continued enjoyment of office. The situation would be Gilbertian were it not, from the national point of view, so tragic.

The plain fact is that Mr. Snowden has not, and never has had, a policy. He has achieved a reputation for firmness which he has done nothing to deserve, and he has been acclaimed as an orthodox financier in spite of the crushing burdens which he has placed on industry. It is true that he was gratuitously rude to a French Finance Minister at The Hague, and he has resolutely refused even to consider any proposal which involved the imposition of a tariff, but unless bad manners and obstinacy be a title to respect, we do not see what attributes the Chancellor of the Exchequer has to commend him. His attitude has always been purely negative, and not one constructive suggestion has ever emanated from him. One method of raising revenue is rejected on what are called moral grounds; another because it would not have met with the approval of Mr. Cobden; and a third because it was approved by his predecessor. When his party first came into power, he could have raised a hundred million development loan, which would have gone a long way towards solving the unemployment problem, at five per cent., but he would have none of it. In consequence the money that might have been paid as interest is now being frittered away on the dole, while public confidence in the Government has sunk so low that even if they announced the issue of a development loan, the public would only come in on condition that the Cabinet went out.

On the other hand, Mr. Snowden has not, in spite of the legend to the contrary, stood up to the extremists of his own party. When a further sum is required for the dole, his attitude reminds us of the young lady in 'Don Juan':

A little still she strove, and much repented,
And whispering "I will ne'er consent"—consented.
and so it has always been with the present
Chancellor of the Exchequer. He has protested
that the nation is already taxed up to the hilt,

and that he cannot find another penny, but in the end he has given way, and put his hand into the taxpayer's pocket. By now, his colleagues realize this, and all that is required is a little extra pressure to secure his consent. When all is said and done, they probably remember that when Mr. Snowden was at the Treasury in the last Labour administration, he sponsored the projected loan to Russia.

Now that he is faced with a deficit, and the confidence of the investing public in the Government has reached its nadir, he can think of nothing better than to utter a few ambiguous phrases about economy, which have only made matters a good deal worse. *Non tali auxilio* has been the City's comment, and prices have been marked down accordingly. References to the imposition of fresh burdens upon those best able to bear them, coming from such a source, are naturally interpreted as a hint of a rise in super-tax, and consequently only add to the prevailing insecurity. This country has had the misfortune to suffer some incompetent Chancellors of the Exchequer in the past, but we doubt whether it has ever known so maladroit a custodian of its finances as that lath painted to look like iron, Mr. Philip Snowden.

TOO YOUNG AT FIFTY?

A N unexpected by-product of the unemployment problem has been the re-emergence of the old controversy as to the decadence of youth and the selfishness of the old in clinging to responsible positions which, it is claimed, could be more adequately staffed by the fresh minds of their juniors. The dispute itself is as old as the hills; for our part, we have very little doubt that Cain and Abel both agreed that Adam had made a mess of things in the Garden of Eden, and it may be taken as a moral certainty that Shem, Ham and Japhet all three shared the modern sailor's doubt of the seaworthiness of Noah's Ark. But however that may be, the controversy in its present form is affected not only by the contemporary increase in the length of life but also by recent changes in education and business practice, and we are inclined to think that an impartial examination of these factors may be of interest.

It is common ground among the armchair critics that the young man of to-day is unable to fill important positions in industry, in contrast to many instances of brilliant and successful young men in previous times. But it is false reasoning to infer that this is necessarily caused by inability in the young or selfish obstinacy in the old, and the actual facts do not, when properly considered, support any such inference.

To deal first with the credentials of youth. The average pass and honours standard in examinations has risen considerably in the last twenty-five years, and it follows that the average scholastic knowledge of the present time is higher than before. Not only so, but there exist to-day many institutions organized by the State for vocational training, so there is no reason to suppose that in practical, as compared with academic, knowledge the modern young man is more ignorant than his predecessors.

If, then, he is not deficient in knowledge, is there any weakness of character which places the "glit-

tering prizes" beyond his reach? It is obvious that there are no absolute standards which can be applied in this field, but everybody must be familiar with instances of young men hard at work in conditions of strenuous competition and showing no lack of energy. But if the alleged conspiracy of the old to maintain their positions at the expense of the young is examined, it will in turn be found to have little substance in fact; it is only the exceptional man who goes on working much after sixty when he is not obliged to.

It would seem, then, that there must be some underlying cause for slow promotion which resides outside individual talent and character, and this is to be sought in the complexity of modern life and industry. This factor has arisen almost entirely in the last fifty years and has been most marked in the last quarter of a century. Coupled with it is the ever-widening field of knowledge and practice which makes specialization a necessity. Most advances in industry are the result of cumulative perfection of minute detail, and since knowledge of detail is quantitative, it follows that experience becomes increasingly valuable as compared with any other single attribute in the successful man. Hence, despite a high standard of knowledge at the start of his adult life, it is necessary for the young man to reconcile himself to years of work before he qualifies for a major or responsible position.

It is interesting, however, to note that new industries offer greater opportunities to young men. Here invention proceeds rapidly and progress is made by relatively crude improvements or by developments which are due to imagination rather than laborious perfection of detail. The wireless and gramophones of to-day, for example, are vastly different from those of 1921, while improvements in the instruments and technique of mechanized land warfare have been incomparably greater in extent than in naval warfare, which was already mechanized at the close of the Great War.

Generally speaking, however, the direction of industry by the middle-aged or elderly seems inevitable under modern conditions, and the lack of scope for ambitious youth is a point that raises serious considerations in its social and psychological aspects. Obviously no man can give his best if his reward is postponed to the distant future, more especially when he feels that in his own particular field his ability is beyond reproach, and is perhaps checked and circumscribed by the caution and possibly the complacency of his seniors, who are probably hardly aware that some part of their reluctance to accept changes is due less to sound business considerations than to growing mental inertia.

The classic case of this kind is, of course, the British railways, whose boards of directors probably average nearer seventy than sixty years of age, men who naturally tend to think in terms of the past practice rather than the future developments of transport, to the handicapping of the technical and operating staff and of the shareholders alike. More than twenty-five years ago, for instance, the late Lord Claud Hamilton turned down a scheme for the electrification of the Great Eastern Railway suburban lines on the ground that electrification was not practical railway policy, and the dead hand of reaction has kept that railway to steam while the Southern—once a byword among rail-waymen—has now largely modernized itself.

We do not pretend to have any cut-and-dried remedy for this state of affairs, but we throw out, purely as a suggestion, the idea that it might be wise to reduce the salaries of men over sixty—whose actual expenditure, both of work and income, should then be diminishing—and to increase both the responsibilities and the pay of men between thirty and fifty, whose responsibility and costs of living are increasing year by year. The proposal may sound revolutionary, but it might be profitable, both in the industrial and social sense.

THE PROBLEM OF DISARMAMENT

I—SOME GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

BY SIR CHARLES PETRIE

THE long-awaited Disarmament Conference is to be held, in all probability at Geneva, in February of next year, and the interval for preparation is none too long in view of the magnitude of the issues involved.

There have already been, it is true, conferences to consider various aspects of disarmament, notably the Washington and London Naval Conferences, and some of them have achieved a certain measure of success, but they have all, in reality, been preparatory to the general conference of which the date has now been fixed.

It would, indeed, be difficult to exaggerate its importance, for it will meet at a time when the world is standing at the parting of the ways. If it succeeds, mankind will be assured of peace for a generation, while if it fails, there must of necessity be another armament race leading to a catastrophe that might well prove the Peloponnesian War of modern civilization. In these circumstances, the issues at stake cannot be too carefully examined by those whom they affect: that is to say, all who are responsible for the guidance of public opinion.

It is obvious that in this imperfect world all temporal power must in the last resort depend upon force. A State that had no police to enforce its laws would inevitably find that they were continually being broken by the criminal section of the population, and that the impunity with which this could be done was an added encouragement to crime. On the other hand, a savage penal code, drastically enforced, defeats its purpose, and the old tag that "one might as well be hanged for sheep as for lamb" accurately describes the public feeling where the law is unduly severe. In short, there is a happy mean, though it is not necessarily the same in every country.

This consideration applies with even greater force to armaments, which are subject to a very definite law of diminishing returns. Up to a certain point the possession of an army, navy, and air force does give a nation security, but the moment that these armaments rouse the suspicion of its neighbours, they are a cause of insecurity. The German fleet, for example, in the 'eighties of last century secured the coast against attack, but when it became so enlarged as to alarm Great Britain, it was at once converted from an asset into a liability.

Not the least important question which the forthcoming conference will have to decide is the exact point at which armaments cease to provide security, and become a source of potential danger to their owners, for there never was a greater fallacy than the adage that if one wishes for peace, it is necessary to prepare for war.

Then, again, the value of armaments is not absolute, but relative to the needs of the country to which they belong, and they are the outward and visible

sign of its policy. The population of Great Britain, for example, is approximately the same as that of Brazil, but it would never be seriously contended that the navies of the two nations should therefore be equal. The former, with interests in all parts of the globe and a wholly inadequate food supply in the British Isles, obviously needs a larger fleet to protect the trade-routes than the latter, which has no overseas commitments, and is fortunate enough to be self supporting. On the other hand, France, although with a smaller population than Great Britain, quite clearly requires a larger army on account of her geographical position.

Furthermore, armaments are affected by international politics as well as by national policy. The uneasy relations between France and Italy, and between France and Germany, as well as the suspicion with which Russia is regarded by her neighbours, are undoubtedly causes of the extensive armaments of the present day. Once such sources of friction have been eliminated, an effective measure of disarmament will not be difficult, but until this has been done there will always be the danger of a repetition of the events of the London Naval Conference, which failed to arrive at a Five Power agreement because the political differences between two of its members remained unsettled.

There is also the economic aspect of the problem to be considered, and that from several angles. In Great Britain, for instance, a large navy is in effect a form of protection for the iron and steel industries. On the Continent the great conscript armies of pre-war days were some guarantee against unemployment, and it is no mere coincidence that at the present time France, the nation that is most completely armed, has the fewest unemployed.

By no means all the expenditure upon armaments is unproductive, and so long as an army and navy do not become involved in war, there is a good deal to be said, from the purely economic point of view, for giving them a respectable size, always provided, of course, that they do not necessitate unduly heavy taxation, or absorb men whose services are required by industry. Nor is this all, for there are a great many subsidiary trades that benefit indirectly from money spent on armaments, and they have considerable ramifications. Such being the case, it is in no way surprising that in every country there should be vested interests, of varying strength, opposed to disarmament, and it would be ridiculous to dismiss them as reactionary and unprogressive. They may, on the contrary, have a very strong economic justification for their attitude, which it would be foolish to ignore merely because on other grounds their position is untenable.

Not the least of the difficulties in the way of disarmament is the legacy of the war. The various Peace Treaties compulsorily disarmed the vanquished, while leaving the victors full liberty to please themselves as to the size of the armed forces which they maintained. As a temporary measure this procedure is defensible, but it has now been in force for so long that in more than one of the ex-allied countries public opinion has come to take it for granted that German armaments are always to remain inferior to those of certain other Powers.

This development is the more regrettable in view of the fact that the terms of the Peace Treaties (also Article 8 of the Covenant of the League of Nations) clearly imposed a moral obligation on the victors to disarm, and consequently their delay in doing so has roused a feeling of resentment among their late enemies with which it is difficult not to sympathize. It would appear, therefore, that the delegates to the forthcoming conference will have, so far as is humanly possible, to banish from their minds the arbitrary division of the Powers into victors and vanquished, and rather to approach the

subject of their deliberations with an open mind unprejudiced by the memories of the late war. The nations must meet at the conference-table as equals, or it will be better for them not to meet at all.

Then, again, the progress of invention during the past twenty or thirty years has not made the problem any easier of solution. At the beginning of the century the question resolved itself into one almost exclusively of man-power on land and tonnage at sea. Limit the number of soldiers, and fix the size of ships, and nothing more remained to be done. The situation to-day is very different, and by no means admits of the application of such simple remedies. It is impossible to prohibit the study of chemistry on pain of death, or to forbid the manufacture of aircraft in any circumstances, and yet every chemist is a potential inventor of a lethal gas, and every aeroplane is capable of transformation into a fighting, scouting, or bombing machine.

Mechanization has introduced wholly new values, of which the significance is still uncertain. For example, what relation does a tank bear to a platoon of infantry? The question may at first sight appear ridiculous, but it must be answered before any real progress can be made with disarmament. The mechanized British army of 1931 is probably a more effective fighting force than its predecessor of 1914, although in actual numbers it is smaller.

Mutatis mutandis, the same argument holds true of naval armaments. Warship construction has made such strides of late and its future is still so obscure, that effective limitation is now only possible by the formation of the most detailed regulations which no layman can hope to understand, and after the respective merits of capital ships and submarines have been carefully weighed. In short, we can no longer think of armaments solely in terms of men and tons.

Closely connected with these considerations is the method of the control to be exercised. Each nation can pledge itself not to spend more than a certain sum either upon all armaments (which would obviate the difficulty of limitation by categories), or it can give an undertaking to keep each type of armament within defined limits. Both pledges are admittedly open to more than one objection, but then so is every proposal for disarmament if the will to disarm is not there. Napoleon thought he had crushed Prussia for ever by limiting the size of the army which he allowed her to maintain, but she outwitted him, and all history goes to show that effective disarmament is impossible unless it is voluntary.

In these circumstances, the methods of control should surely be considered in the light rather of convenience than of compulsion, and it might even prove possible to allow States to give their pledge in the form that suited them best. In the writer's opinion it cannot be too often or too strongly emphasized that the coming conference will be one of nations genuinely anxious to discuss the most effective means of reducing the burden of armaments which is pressing upon them, and any attempt to force them to accept a rigid formula will endanger the object of their meeting.

(To be continued)

I WILL NOT KISS YOU

BY HUGH LONGDEN

I WILL not kiss you on the lips
Because a kiss—even the gentlest—
Can only sip like body sips,
Satisfying appetite's behest.

But I will hold your littlest finger without moving;
And hold your eyes, nor even lean toward you:
For I can find no better way of proving
How purely I have always just adored you.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE—II

BY CYRIL MARTIN

THE fact that the unemployment insurance scheme is hopelessly insolvent cannot be explained away by merely referring to the obvious fact that we have had several bad years in the world of industry. If that was an adequate explanation, all voluntary agencies for insuring against distress or disaster would also be insolvent. The fundamental fact about the failure of the State scheme is that the failure is due to its being a State scheme, created by politicians and run by paid officials who prosper on its weaknesses. The danger about the present Royal Commission is that it is dependent for its information upon the self-same officials. Recommendations are not likely to be submitted which would reduce the numbers of those whose livelihood depends upon the State scheme. Yet such a reduction is perfectly possible.

In this article I propose to point out a few of the weaknesses of the present scheme. My information has been culled from members of Courts of Referees and from officials of Employment Exchanges.

I do not propose to waste much time upon such well-known defects as the so-called "transitional conditions." These were enacted by the Conservative Government, be it noted, in 1927. Under the general scheme only those can draw unemployment benefit who have paid not fewer than thirty contributions in the two years preceding their claim; that is, thirty out of a possible 104. Seeing the long duration of benefit once it is begun, it is very doubtful if this demand for only thirty contributions is economically sound. But the "transitional conditions" allow benefit to those who have thirty contributions to their credit at any time or eight within the previous two years. This is obviously Poor Relief disguised as insurance, and Poor Relief given as of right without any enquiry as to the means of the whole family and so on. Other well-known defects in the scheme are the rules by which men or women can earn high pay for three days in the week and draw benefit for the other three.

But apart from these obvious flaws in the scheme, there are other and less-known weaknesses which need to be exposed.

In the first place we need to consider whether the maximum penalty of six weeks' deprivation of benefit is adequate. This is the normal period of disallowance where claimants are found to have refused suitable work, to have left work voluntarily without just cause or to have lost their work through misconduct. In cases of voluntarily leaving work or losing it through misconduct the period of six weeks may be reduced, but in no case can it be increased. Especially among women claimants there are innumerable cases which show a frequent infliction of this penalty, thus indicating a determination on the part of the claimant to draw benefit as much, and to work as little, as possible. There is plenty of evidence that employees deliberately court dismissal. Since the abolition of the "genuinely seeking work" condition by the Labour Government's Act of 1930, this question has become of vital importance. Every Court of Referees, especially those dealing with women, has to deal daily with really shocking cases of this kind and the penalty of six weeks is merely laughed at by the claimants. A six months' penalty or even a power to eject from the scheme entirely might well be within the powers of the Courts of Referees.

Secondly, the officials of the Employment Exchanges have now virtually no power to refuse benefit and their powers to suspend its payment are inadequate. They can only refer claims to the Courts of Referees. Even the most trumpery and obvious refusals of benefit have now to be made by the Courts and every decision of

the Courts involves a mass of clerical labour, type-writing and stationery, as well as travelling expenses of the claimants. Thus a man is given a week's pay in lieu of notice on the termination of his employment. The officials must refer to the Court the question whether during the week of his notice he was technically unemployed, when obviously he was not, as he was paid full wages. Or a claimant wants dependents' benefit for his mother, aged 68, who gets the old age pension. He cannot get it unless he in normal times "mainly maintains" her. But it is nearly always the case that the old age pension is the main support of an aged mother. Yet the officials have to refer such claims to the Courts of Referees.

Thirdly, the scheme enables unemployed men and women to marry and automatically gives them dependents' benefit for as many children as they like to produce. When an unemployed man and an unemployed woman marry, they at once draw 17 + 9 shillings a week and a further 2 shillings for each child. Why should people marry when unemployed? And how can they be taught not to do so, save by a refusal of benefit, as is done with the less pampered, but more deserving, holders of war pensions? And as to the number of children, I have heard of a case where a man, separated from his wife, was drawing benefit for five children by his wife and for two more by the woman who was politely styled by the scheme his "housekeeper." The habits of thrift and self-respect will never be inculcated so long as unemployed men and women can as of right draw benefits for their families in this way.

Then there is the problem of the married women. To-day there are innumerable married women drawing benefit when their husbands are regularly earning enough to support them. The Courts of Referees have no such power as is possessed by Public Assistance Committees to investigate the total income of the family. A married woman is dealt with under the scheme as a single unit. This is in full accord with the political ideas of the time, and no doubt the suffragette mentality would protest if it were laid down that no married woman should draw benefit unless she proved that she has to support herself or her children. But would there be any injustice if this was the law? As I wrote in a previous article, many women go to their husbands on marriage with a dowry of 15s. a week of indefinite duration, paid to them out of the insurance funds.

These features of the present scheme result in wholesale waste of money and largely account for the present bankruptcy of the scheme. My enquiries have convinced me that vast numbers are drawing benefits under the scheme who should never have them. The way in which the scheme is worked is proving thoroughly demoralizing to the classes for which it caters. There is now abroad a spirit of get as get can. The old and healthy atmosphere of the Friendly Societies has been dispersed. In its place we have a spirit of grab that is reducing our politics to the lowest level and is destroying decent citizenship.

Whether such defects as I have pointed out are not inherent in any scheme that is run by the State and worked through civil servants is a question which, when happier times come, will need to be studied closely. With our modern electorate no scheme for providing monetary benefits can be a healthy one, for political pressure from the recipients is bound to result in the abandonment of sound financial and economic principles. It may well be impossible in our present crisis to get back to sound methods, but it is the duty of all politicians who have a higher conception of their duty than to win votes by public bribery to insist that the present scheme shall be freed from such features as I have outlined. Pending a total reconstruction of the scheme—and that must wait until trade conditions improve—our need is to examine very closely anomalous and unjustified payments.

THE PANEL DOCTOR

THE Social Conscience is one of the most ingenious inventions of the democratic mind. It used to be assumed that duty and "inclination" were in more or less constant conflict. Generosity and mercy, for example, were thought to be personal affairs, exercisable only at the price of a certain voluntary sacrifice. How comforting, therefore, to learn that conscience, so far from being a purely individual mentor, is really a collective organ, whose voice can be made audible, and its demands satisfied, by the inscribing of appropriate crosses at polling-booths. How easy does the exercise of the Christian virtues thus become! What a true labour-saving! How much simpler and more practicable than the old text is the revised version: "Take all that he has, and give some of it to the poor"! Dispossession has become nine points, if not of the law, at any rate of the doctrine, of the social prophets; and if everything worked out according to programme, there is a good deal to be said for the ideal of securing for every family in the country a daily chicken in the pot, and no questions asked. Unfortunately, the material problems of life cannot be solved so simply; and painful experience has verified a saying of Strindberg that, "by handicapping the strong, we neither create happiness nor do we improve humanity."

Our economic industrial situation has, naturally enough, directed attention to the futility of our attempts to solve along these lines the problem of unemployment. But futility little less pronounced characterizes also our kindred attempt to deal with the problem of industrial sickness. It is, of course, desirable, both for humanitarian and for national reasons, that no one needing medical or surgical attention should be debarred therefrom by reason of poverty. The value of the early recognition and the early treatment of disease needs no stressing; and there is no valid answer to the contention that all the medical and surgical skill at our disposal should be made available to those who need it, in proportion to their need. Moreover, it is certain that this ideal result cannot, in a country like ours, be attained by the mere play of free competition. It is reasonable and right that the State should hold itself responsible for looking after the invalids of industry as it does after the invalids of war; for it cannot be contended that our present economic and industrial organization permits these to make adequate provision for themselves. And, if the existing system of medical service fulfilled, and merely fulfilled, this purpose, it would be beyond serious criticism. But, in fact, not only does it fail to afford to those who are in want of it that valuable skill which working people cannot purchase for themselves; but, through its confusion with an elaborate non-therapeutic structure of financial subsidies, with all the clerical and detective work which the administration of these involves, it has actually come to constitute a demoralizing, dys-hygienic force.

The general practitioner is more and more becoming "a mere clerk and quill-driver," when he is not playing the part of an official detective. Instead of being primarily concerned with the nature and cause of his patient's illness, and with the devising and carrying out of appropriate treatment in accordance with his knowledge and skill, the panel doctor is preoccupied with the filling up of endless forms, the writing of certificates and, most unfortunate of all, with cynical doubts as to the truth of the patient's statements and the reality of his alleged symptoms. Is he malingering in order to obtain sickness benefit or compensation; or is he, having nothing better to do, entertaining himself and wasting the doctor's time because it costs nothing? "No labour known to me," said recently the president of a Prussian medical society, "is so disgusting as that of a medical sickness insurance fraud detective." Certainly, nothing could be more destructive to the traditional relation between a good doctor and his

patient. So long as people had the force to pay some fee, however small, when they wished to consult the doctor, rather than to visit the theatre or indulge in some other diversion, it might safely be assumed, ninety-nine times out of a hundred, that when they entered the consulting-room they presented some definite medical problem.

That the conditions of medical practice in Germany—the mother of compulsory insurance—are no better than our own is made clear by the account given in an interesting book recently translated into English ('The Doctor's Mission.' By Erwin Liek. Murray. 6s.). In that book, a well-known German physician is quoted as saying: "The State takes by force from the poor a disproportionately large amount of their income, spends a large part of the money thus obtained upon a huge administrative apparatus, takes advantage of the helplessness of the doctors, and forces them to do what is necessarily bad work; because the doctors, in order to make a living, are compelled to treat far more cases than they can properly handle." There, as here, it may be noted, it is possible for health-insurance doctors to attend such enormous numbers only because the services they are expected to render are of the most superficial standardized character.

Are we to conclude, then, that it were just as well that the thousands of people now crowding the panel-doctors' waiting-rooms who, before the days of compulsory insurance, rarely sought medical advice, went, as hitherto, doctorless on their course? Or is it that more doctors are needed to minister to the medical wants of our population? The situation demands a little analysis before we attempt to answer these questions. The important fact, often overlooked, is that fully three-quarters of all the patients visiting panel doctors—and these visits, in England alone, total something like seventy-five million a year—cannot appreciably be benefited by medical treatment, however many doctors are available and however many minutes are allotted to each patient. To quote Dr. Liek: "By forcing insurance on large classes of people who hitherto led quiet and sensible lives, a general unrest, neurasthenia and hypochondriasis have been created among them." These people feel that they must get a taste of what they have been made to pay for; and they get in the way of searching themselves, "as a monkey for fleas," for any trivial, evanescent, unimportant spot, pimple or ache which they can call upon some wretched doctor to diagnose and "treat." Consequently, those who have genuine ailments, really demanding and justifying medical attention and medical time, are unfairly deprived of the skill and service they require. For the most skilful and alert doctor in the world cannot, without offence, get rid of these fussers-over-trifles with the celerity which measures their deserts and their needs. As Dr. Liek says, "patients who are seriously ill can rapidly be dealt with on the basis of fact. Patients with trivial functional or nervous disorders claim an undue part of the doctor's time and patience . . . To people who lead a normal, active, sensible life, the doctor should be an exceptional adviser, not a daily companion."

So far from compulsory health insurance as administered to-day lessening invalidity among the working classes, it seems at least an open question if it has not materially added to it. During the war period, when wages were high and employment easily obtained, both the incidence and the duration of sickness were noticeably lessened among the working population, and there is little evidence that anybody was the worse for it.

In the interests both of the art of medicine and of the working population, the whole problem should, in the light of experience, be radically reconsidered. The aim should be, not to replace the panel system by a corps of salaried medical officials answerable to the bureaucrats who have entrenched themselves at Whitehall, but to separate the practice of the healing art from the entanglement of administrative duties which are not only alien but inimical to it. Measures—such as

the charging of a small contributory fee to the patient at each consultation—should also be adopted with a view to eliminating the surgery-lizards who now help to make the doctor's life a burden. The doctors are financially much too heavily involved voluntarily to take any steps towards recovering their professional self-respect. They are terrified of upsetting the goose on whose eggs they depend for nourishment. The great medical associations, interpreting the general will of their members, again, are concerned far more with such problems as the amount of the capitation fee and the keeping down of the demands on the doctors' skill than with preserving the honour and the quality of professional work and professional life. Reform will have to come from outside, if it is to come at all.

QUAERO

THE LAND OF FABULOUS TREASURE

BY SIR DENISON ROSS

FEW countries are more richly endowed with masterpieces of art and culture than Persia. Her national history stretches back to the middle of the first millenarian B.C., and the result of recent researches may possibly be to establish the fact that the country we now call Persia had a civilization of her own even as far back as 1500 B.C. Her geographic situation, placed as she is at the meeting-place of East and West, has been an important factor in her development and rise to power. Though in the modern world she ranks as a comparatively poor and backward country, yet her history is one of successive empires, dominant and powerful, and attracting within their orbit the highest art and culture of their time.

But though these civilizations have passed into history and tradition, there still remain many and varied evidences of Persia's former greatness. In various parts of the country are the ruins of the once great cities, the palaces of emperors and kings famous in the history of the East. We find vestiges of their splendour and pomp in the marvellous treasures of art and jewellery still in the possession of the Persian monarchs. Many of these were shown at the recent exhibition in London, but there are many more considered either too precious or too sacred to be removed from the country.

The late Lord Curzon noticed the contrast between the present impoverished state of the country and the fabulous treasures stored away and hoarded in the imperial palaces. The value, for instance, of the Persian Crown jewels is authoritatively estimated at many millions sterling. Included in the collection is the second greatest diamond in the world, the Darya-i-nur, "The Sea of Light," sister stone of the world-famous Koh-i-nur (Koh-i-noor) diamond, now the property of the British Crown, and reposing in the safety of the Tower of London. Like its sister stone, the Darya-i-nur has a history no less fascinating and terrible than the Koh-i-nur. Many are the stories that have gathered around this stone, some no doubt authentic, others, as is inevitable in such cases, merely legendary and probably having little substance in fact. During the time which he spent in Persia, Curzon asked to be allowed to view the Darya-i-nur, "but," he says, "it was shut up in an iron box that lay upon the seat of the elevated throne and it appeared that in the absence, either of the key or of the Grand Vizier, I think the latter, it could not be shown." Both the Koh-i-nur and the Darya-i-nur originally came from India, but while the former, after various vicissitudes ultimately found its way to England, the latter has always remained in Persia's possession, though one illustrious monarch, Fath Ali Shah, caused

to be inscribed upon it his own name, thus at one and the same time immortalizing his own colossal vanity and considerably reducing the value of the stone.

Another famous treasure of the Persian crown which was absent from the exhibition was the priceless "Peacock Throne," around which many romances have been woven. This exquisite and beautiful work of art presents a spectacle of blazing jewellery unrivalled throughout the world. The whole framework is overlaid with gold plate, delicately chiselled and enamelled, and encrusted with precious stones, mainly emeralds and rubies.

Popular opinion has been inclined to associate Persian art and culture with the making of beautifully worked carpets and rugs, and other textiles. Yet this is only one aspect of Persian art, though certainly a craft in which the Persians have inherited a great tradition which more recent examples of their work have fully maintained. In this art the Persian is still unrivalled. Two of the carpets on view at the exhibition came direct from sacred mosques, and, though not in themselves considered sacred, have through their long seclusion in holy places rarely been exposed to the view even of the Persian people themselves. And it is certain that never before have European eyes been permitted to see them. Magnificent examples, belonging to famous European churches, were also lent for the occasion.

Persia inherits also a great literary tradition, and the beautifully illustrated manuscripts on which are written the classics of Persian prose and poetry are among the most highly prized artistic works of the country. Exquisitely moulded pottery of the thirteenth century—an era when the art of Persia reached one of its highest levels—has also been secured. This pottery rivals in beauty and delicacy the masterpieces of Chinese and early Egyptian art, and to the connoisseur is a continuous source of wonder and admiration.

MENTAL GOLF

BY LEIGH D. BROWNLEE

YOU may remember that delightful character created by P. G. Wodehouse—the golfing peer who stood at the top of Shaftesbury Avenue, pondering the possibility of reaching Piccadilly Circus with a brassie shot, and came to the conclusion that it could be done "if you got a bit of pull on it."

Until I met Abraham K. Jones, of New York City, I had imagined that mental golf was confined to humorous fiction. Now it seems that Abraham K., who is mad and rich enough to be very mad, rarely stops moving, and ranks high among the world's worst golfers, has played mental golf in almost every European city, town, village and hamlet—not a few theoretical shots but a full round of eighteen imaginary holes.

This, of course, is mania—certifiable mania. Why a man should want to hurry through London streets playing illusionary golf when he might be playing the real thing on a real course would seem to pass all understanding, and not until I had seen this incredible American essay to strike an actual ball with an actual club, had observed the shocked look on his caddie's face, and had assisted the secretary to lead him, tactfully but firmly, from the course, did I fully appreciate this madness of Abraham.

Uncontrollably keen on the game, utterly unable to play it, and virtually warned off every golf course in the kingdom, Abraham K. devised a mental substitute; it is now, as I said, a vice and a mania.

Picture him, if you can, on one of his rounds in London. He is conscious of no one; weather is immaterial; traffic does not exist. Before him lie streets and buildings which must be negotiated with his imaginary ball and bag of clubs in the least possible number of strokes.

He has described several mental rounds to me; once I accompanied him on part of such a pilgrimage, though I do not think he was aware of my presence. Indeed, I am of the opinion that a brass band could accompany him, unseen and unheard; while engaged in his pastime he is not of this world.

This particular round, to the best of my belief, started at Marble Arch. For several moments he stood motionless in the midst of the traffic, gazed piercingly down Oxford Street, muttered a few words, and started briskly towards the East as if he hoped to reach the coast well within the hour. Apparently the round had begun.

I fancy the first hole finished in the Bargain Basement of a big stores in Oxford Street, for he went in there, bought nothing, and came out at once. I believe he got a bogey four. Just short of Oxford Circus his arrest on a charge of loitering with intent to commit a felony seemed imminent; for ten minutes he stood in the middle of a crowded pavement, muttering and shaking his head incessantly, while he debated the possibility of slicing round on to the green in Regent Street. Down Piccadilly Circus way he got a bit involved, and, as he admitted afterwards, failed completely to carry Leicester Square with a full niblick. Had he done so, he explained, he would have been in a position to put a sliced mashie into the fountains in Trafalgar Square. It was not his fault that a crowd collected when he went through the business of replacing the non-existent divot.

I left him in the throes of his mania and the neighbourhood of Fleet Street. He was just teeing up outside the Law Courts to play a dog-leg hole which took him by way of Chancery Lane to the green outside the Holborn tube station.

All over London he has played this abominable game—from the Mile End Road to Victoria Station, from Bloomsbury Square to Camden Town, from Notting Hill Gate to the Houses of Parliament, and from Ludgate Circus to Lothbury, via the Mint, the Tower of London and Liverpool Street Station. He has accomplished Princes Street, Edinburgh, in a drive, a brassie and a chip; York Minster he carried with a number one iron; and once he awarded himself a valuable prize when he went round the Glasgow tramlines in two under bogey.

Rome has seen some of his brilliant golf, his negotiation of the hazards in the Forum being especially noticeable; in Florence he scintillated, carrying the Pitti Gallery with a shut niblick; and he still speaks of that shot in Naples which ricochetted off eight goats into the hole and gave him an "eagle."

But I like best to think of him in the less-known spots, where narrow, tortuous streets, and peculiar local conditions called for a skill and cunning not seen on any golf course. Godmanchester, Melton Mowbray, Totnes, Abergwili, Itchin Abbas, Much Wenlock, Six Mile Bottom, Mytholmroyd, Wiveliscombe, Yeovil Junction, Clapham Junction, Tally-Cafn and Eghysbach, Upper Norwood, Lower Pontnewydd, Honor Oak, Galashiels, Gerrards Cross, Seven Kings, Seven Sisters, Severn Tunnel Junction, Oswaldtwistle, and Wigston Magna—in these and a host of other localities Abraham K. Jones has walked, stood, stared and muttered as he indulged his horrible vice. To the best of my knowledge he is still an addict. And when to mental is added muscular senility, I suppose he will buy an 'ABC' and a set of large scale maps, with the aid of which he will "golf" from an armchair. For such as A. K. J. there is neither hope nor cure; only death.

WHERE THE SUN IS SHINING

By S. L. BENSUSAN

In theory the journey by a night train from the Gare de Lyon, Paris, to the south is an experience of the kind that one remembers always with pleasure. You must forget that sarcastic Frenchmen declare that P.L.M. stands for "pour la morte," you must forget that your fellow travellers, if any, will probably have a life-long aversion from open windows, you must forget that the ticket-inspector waits until you are asleep to demand and mutilate your ticket. It is sufficient that you are passing from the winter to the spring in the brief space of a night, that in the early hours when the sun, so long invisible, is rising from the depths of the sea in all his glory, you will find yourself in Provence, the land of light and song.

The long-drawn cry of the porter, "Avignon, Avignon, dix minutes d'arrêt," was like the realization of a beautiful dream, the dream that came to me in dear November with the first of the London fogs. Full of joyous anticipation I sought the platform. There were the familiar trestle tables, the urns of chocolate, the brioche. But alas, it was a Tuesday morning and on Monday in France one does not bake bread, and the train was a little late and the morning colder than it should have been and the chocolate had decided to follow the example of the morning. These little things are sent to try us.

I write from a little white-walled, green-shuttered red-roofed villa, on the mountain side in the Dardennes. Above us the great hills tower towards the east and the sun cannot scale their wall before ten o'clock, so that morning adds a touch of chill to its freshness. Happily there is one great recompense. Part of the rocky wall has been shattered, perhaps long ages ago, and four fragments that stand out alone and dominate the valley have an extraordinarily human appearance. Prominent in the first place is Queen Victoria, most unmistakably that most remarkable lady who gave her name to a phase of our civilization. The outline is quite clear, the aspect severe, as though she were addressing Sir Robert Peel or Lord Palmerston or Mr. Gladstone. Untouched by age or the elements, she surveys those invisible ministers whom she has summoned to the Dardennes, and could those granite lips find utterance, they would, I am convinced, be heard to say, by way of exordium, "The Queen is much surprised." Next to her Majesty, but at a respectful distance, are the Burghers of Calais, as Rodin saw them, gaunt, suffering and resigned. Morning greets them and the passing years leave them unscathed; they look over the wide terraced hillside where "man goeth forth to his work and to his labour until the evening."

Alas that man should multiply labour by foolishness. As I write, the vines and the peach trees are being pruned, green peas, artichokes and beans are rising, narcissus and jonquil have arisen, a few foraging bees are afield and a few butterflies. But the passage of the day is punctuated by the noise of the shot-gun, and on every pathway one meets the man who is out to kill and eat every little bird that flies. Say nothing about the wanton cruelty of it, the stupidity is still more detestable, for, the insect eaters being destroyed, insects take control, and, between insects and mice, harvests suffer terribly. Mice in their thousands attack the grapes, the almonds, even the peaches, but all owls are shot at sight! They say that this indiscriminate shooting is against the law, but the law is not enforced. They are simple, kindly, stupid men, some of these "chasseurs." "I have seen a fox go along that path," a friend of mine told one of them; "if you went after him instead of the linnets, you would help the people who have chickens."

"A fox," replied the brave chasseur, "and you say he went over there. A fox is a dangerous beast." And he turned in an opposite direction.

Life in a Provençal villa is a pleasant affair and associated with excellent cooking. The kitchen is at the far end of the dining-room and the cook brings everything to table piping hot. The wine was made in the vat in the cellar, it is pure juice of the grapes, from the vines in the plantation; there is not a headache in a bottle of it. The oil used in cooking was extracted in the mill that stands by the dry bed of a river a few hundred yards below; the various fruits in syrup, the conserves and the jellies were made in the season of the fruit harvest. Quince and peach and fig carry a flavour that we do not know at home, because they have been picked at the latest possible moment; so, too, do the oranges and mandarins. Lettuce, endive and young artichokes are with us already, there will be green peas by the end of February, and the table is decorated with flowers. The stove is heated with *charbon de bois*, and is big enough to conduct half a dozen vital operations at a time.

When the sun is at its best and you follow the tracks that folk call roads, the air is full of a subtle scent of thyme, lavender and pine; the first two perfumes belong to last year, the bushes that bore them are merely dry and there are so many that nobody could hope to strip even a small part of them. It is possible to lie out on the hillside in the noonday sun of February, but as soon as the sun goes down or when you pass into the shade, a warm wrap becomes an instant necessity. The difference in temperature is incredible.

The enemy of the mountain side is the enemy of the whole Côte d'Azur, and his name is Mistral, a harsh cold wind blowing, I think, from the north-west and given to searching highway and byway for folk who take less than sufficient care of a weak chest. They are his appointed victims.

Beyond the Mistral we have no visitors. Tradesmen will not climb the hill; they will leave an order at the wine shop, café and épicerie, in sociable combination that serves the simple needs of this corner of the countryside, provided always that they are not in a hurry or do not forget. The postman comes irregularly. A telegram can only be delivered by the postman on his daily round and he appears to be a man with no innate love for letters, telegrams, or steep hill-sides. I think that a cigarette increases the efficiency of the service and the proportion of letters that reach their destination. If tradesmen fail, or supplies are forgotten, neighbours are helpful and kind. There is a spirit of camaraderie on the hill-side. I think the Russian refugees who have established a little colony here brought it with them; theirs is a colony that deserves more notice than this paper can afford.

OUT OF TOWN

BY ELIZABETH TATCHELL

ALL day the train fled through the golden land
That lay like honey in the sun, and blest
With its serenity mine eyes' unrest.
The wild hedgerows unravelled strand by strand
Their woven nets, as underneath my hand
I saw the fields go by, green velvet-drest,
Smooth as a dream, caressing and caress'd.
All day till dusk we sped, nor made a stand.

Then as the splendour of the sun was dying
And stars were waking; down the remembered lane
I came to my own land of friendly faces.
Just as a fugitive who hears the crying
And brazen clamour of pursuers wane
Findeth his sanctuary in quiet places.

A CELESTIAL INCIDENT

BY PETER DURRANT

THE incredible rumour flew quickly through heaven, for the cherubim are terrible gossips and the seraphim are notoriously credulous. It is only fair to most of the greater angels, however, to say that they refused to believe it; and the saints, who knew how difficult it was to pass the gate, pooh-poohed the whole idea.

But yet—the rumour that Mammon was in heaven after all, and not with his friends elsewhere, gathered and grew in volume. It was reported that one of the archangels, who held his court in an outer sanctuary, inclined an ear to the suggestion, and said that one never knew in these days; an undoubted apostle, who had been angered by the higher criticism, said that anything was possible after the revised version. The story grew in weight and substance, and a deputation went to see Peter about it.

It must be admitted that he was frankly unsympathetic. "Remember Mammon?" he said; "why, of course I do. That livery little fellow, with a face like a golden guinea, and a most disgusting display of jewellery on his wings—he didn't want to go, but I threw him out with the rest. Caught his foot on Table Mountain as he went down—must have known there was gold in South Africa—until he was pitchforked into the right pit. No, there's been nobody like him at the gate, and I have to keep a pretty sharp eye on things nowadays. The cherubim must have confused him with some of those Park Lane Jews who've got in lately."

The deputation withdrew. But they were not quite satisfied. Peter was getting old and past his work; one or two rather dubious characters had been admitted lately, grumbled a fiery angel whose robe was ornamented with prostrate dragons.

"Well, after all, you only got in yourself by the skin of your teeth, George," remarked a learned doctor of the angelic host, "you said you were the patron saint of England and Peter didn't like to refuse, but you know you really came from Cappadocia."

It was a shrewd hit, but St. George was ready with his retort.

"At least I was a man when on earth, Abelard," he replied angrily, "your martyrdom was but partial, and not all of us would care for the immortality it has given you below. But indeed it fitted you for the angelic life where there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage."

The unfortunate Abelard sighed deeply, and took refuge behind a harpsichord.

"You were a little too rough with him," said Michael, who now for the first time joined the throng in the main thoroughfare. "And I have always thought—"

But what Michael had always thought will unfortunately never be known, for at that moment he stumbled over a mechanic who was repairing the mosaic floor.

"Oh, go to hell," said the mechanic hastily.

Now it is not etiquette to mention the other place in heaven, and even the humblest mechanic knows better than to swear at an archangel, who is a very formidable person indeed when he is roused.

"A stranger," shouted some; "a profaner of the golden way," cried others. But Michael picked the wretched trembling creature up, and held him aloft in scorn.

"Mammon," he asked sternly, "how did you get back?"

The cherubim twittered excitedly in the distance; the seraphim crowded round.

Mammon pulled himself together after a moment or two. "Well, after all," he said, "I was more sinned against than sinning in that rebellion, and I think I've fully expiated it. Moloch misled me about

it from the start, and Satan saw I had a real genuine grievance, because he let me out after a time. I tried the earth, but on the whole it's a poor place. Why, they keep the gold in the bankers' vaults and live on paper money. All the time I was in London I hardly saw so much as a sovereign, and half the jewellery is faked. Now that's what I like about Heaven—no nine-carat gold, no Brummagem paste, no fakes, all solid stuff, you know. In fairly good taste, too, some of it, I must admit, although some of the decorations strike me as a trifle flashy. I doubt if taste has improved since I left."

He took down a crystal vase, and examined it critically. "Now I could almost swear that's Early Victorian," he said. "Every boarding house in Stoke Newington has one; it's what they call home comforts in the advertisements."

He had quite recovered his self-conceit. As an art-critic, Mammon knew he could give the whole angelic host points and win easily. But he was not quite sure about Michael, whose sword still looked rather too bellicose to be altogether pleasant.

"Before I return you to the pit whence you came," said the archangel—and the heart of Mammon fell—"tell me, how came you to get into heaven again?"

"Well," said the now doomed spirit, who realized he had nothing to gain or lose by telling the truth, "I learnt something useful from my friends in the City. Whenever they want to do a shady trick, they float a limited company, which consists of a lot of shareholders who get bitten and a promoter who makes good. I started a new religion on earth, and brought a lot of followers with me to the very gate of paradise. They all got turned back at the doors, but the promoter got through all right."

LOVELY LILY

BY URSULA BLOOM

HE had always been a butterfly, philanderer, flirt. He had passed from flower to flower, no harm in him, gaiety enamoured of glitter. Now, sitting in the palm court of a fashionable provincial hotel sipping a "side-car," he wondered about things, began to re-shape his life. Queer thing life when you look back on it! Funny! He was thirty, probably the best years were behind him, yet he hoped not, for he did not want to grow old. He had all the modern youth's sick loathing against sagging knees, greying hair, pouching chins. He wanted to be always like this, bright with the burnish of accomplishment. Enthusiasm, grace, zest! All that sort of thing.

He had married at twenty-two. He was not sure whether that had been a mistake now, because he was seeing things differently. He had loved Kitty, just as much as it lay in his power to love anybody, and she had understood him. Four years of it. Kitty toiling for him, working for him. Kitty wide-eyed with amazement at his philanderings and flirtings, not understanding it, she, who was herself so absolutely loyal. She had come from a prim family; all her friends were punctilious. Even old George, who had once proposed to her, was solid, reliable, terribly sincere. But Mike had been different.

"I am like that," he told her, when at the end of eighteen months they flared into their first crashing quarrel, "can't help it. It isn't that there's anything wrong, a kiss or two. No more. I swear no more. But I must have a flip out of life, I'm a cocktail, and I want the cocktail existence."

"One of these days," she flashed back, "someone will take you at your word. Then what will happen?"

Oh well! What would happen? But she had grown to understand him better than that. She had grasped

that there was no real vice, just froth, frippery. Once she came to him in the garden when he was sitting in the little thatched summer house; the mignonette was out, he remembered that, essence of it, up-rushing. She sat down beside him.

"I do understand you," she said, "I do, my dear, I do. Only I am so afraid that one day you will drive me to do something desperate, divorce you, or something awful. I shall be so ashamed. Women get angry and then they fly to extremes. If it ever happens, remember afterwards I shall think of this hour, and if you want me to come back to you, I shall be waiting."

"Darling, I will remember," he replied.

He was relying on that now. An hour, an exquisite hour in a summer house with its thatched apex like a giant bees' skep against the saffron and flame of the sunset. Mignonette, warm rivers of scent, the first light dew rising, and the last birds flying home to the trees. He was remembering it, and, knowing Kitty, he believed that even to-day she would keep her word, and she would have him back.

He'd been a fool, a weak, philandering fool, that was it. He thought of the girls, counting them off on his fingers much as monks tell beads. A rosary of girls. Odd, when you thought of it in that way! Lola, how grand she was, with her dark eyes, and her swan neck, and her presence. Dolores, a blonde beauty with a certain goldness about her skin, and her lips; you could not define it. He had supposed himself to be in love with Dolores, and he hadn't been really. Difficult to see it at the time. Hard. Looks altogether altered when you adjudge it in retrospect. Mavis, little kid! She had got a jolly laugh, and she was good at games. A bit strenuous though, too strenuous, not womanish enough. Then Roselle. Roselle, white-petal wonder of her, more flower than girl. He had dreamt the world to be well lost for her, and had fallen hopelessly in love. Roselle, ninon and tagel, floating, flowery chiffon, with her wide, wise eyes and her face like a white blossom surrounded by dark twists of hair. Something elfish about her, Puckish, set you wondering. . . .

"You've got to divorce me," he told Kitty.

She had made a fuss. With all his philanderings she loved him, wanted to keep him and swore that Roselle was unworthy; a little cat, the sort of woman you couldn't marry, and wouldn't be happy if you did. But he persisted in his point. He wanted her. She was so charming, she had glamour, allure!

All that fuss about getting the divorce, evidence, and the necessity for keeping Roselle's name out of it. How wearisome it had been. The divorce courts, too, had been drab. He hated seeing Kitty with her face smeared with crying, sitting on the other side of the court with George. Good friend George, to Kitty; able, staid, she could lean on him. A good fellow, legs like a billiard table, but reliable! He would never let anybody down, and was undoubtedly devoted to Kitty. Shame flashed through Mike as he contemplated Kitty and George. Then there had come six months of waiting. Six months in which to wake up.

He travelled. Travel is excellent; it diverts your mind. Le Touquet, Monte Carlo, Menton, crystal cities against blue seas, scent of pine woods and clove stocks in one. Wine-like attar of primulas. Then he discovered about Roselle. She did not mean to marry him. He burst in on her in Paris one evening, and found her gay and careless, not caring, with a young Italian count, a dirty little Dago, that she had in tow. He challenged her, and she shrugged slimly indolent shoulders. Why shouldn't she? She did not care for Englishmen really—too cold. She was marrying Rudy in the morning.

"To hell with Rudy," said Mike, and then, realizing the greily acrid ashes of a once beautiful emotion, enquired bitterly, "and what about me?"

"Well, what about you?"

"Kitty has divorced me, and she didn't want me to be divorced. It was all a put-up job so that we could be married."

Again she shrugged her shoulders. He saw the white-hot snow of diamonds that he had given her. More fool he, but too late to think of that now. She said, "Well, we can't be married."

And he demanded, "Why not?"

Roselle put her dainty little fingers to her ears. "What a pest you are, Mike, to worry me. Why insist? We can't be married. I don't want to marry you. I am not going to marry you."

"You've found someone richer and younger?" he demanded, an inward worm of jealousy writhing within him.

"If you like to put it that way—yes."

He turned on his heel. Contemptible little cat! God, what we poor fools of men suffer from women. Chucking him like that, all his happiness, all his life, breaking his heart. He pulled himself up with a jerk. Wasn't that what he had done to Kitty? Yes, but that was different. Why different? He asked himself truthfully, and he knew that it wasn't different at all.

"I've been a fool," he said.

A few more months' flirting, wandering round, settling nowhere, gay butterfly of chance flitting on flowers of fortune. Flirtation always in its sham and emptiness; flirtation and no real honey of happiness. Then the realization stealing in on him, that it was Kitty he wanted. Kitty he had loved all the time. Memory of a thatched summer-house coming back to him. Of mignonette, hypersweet.

I shall be waiting. . . .

And she would, too! Even for a worthless sham like himself. He cherished no false delusions about himself, nothing like that. He knew that he was silly, not wicked, just silly.

He wrote to Kitty. Kitty wrote back. She had a flat in Sloane Square, and the women were selling mimosa underneath her window. Did he remember the mimosa on their honeymoon at Beaulieu? He took that to be a good sign. Yes, he did remember the mimosa and their honeymoon too. He wrote to her fully from his heart. Would she forgive him? Could he hold her to that promise? It would make all the difference to him. It would be the new chance in life to go forward bravely and to make good. The butterfly would change into the industrious bee. Would she remember? He thought that an eternity elapsed between the posting of that letter and the answer to it lying on his plate at the hotel breakfast. Yes, she did remember. Short, terse letter. He had better come to her at once. He knew that she never broke a promise.

He wired: "Will take you out to dine to-night. Calling six." He had known lots of friends who had done the same thing, had a divorce and then re-married. Queer! Swinging of the pendulum. It just happens to some people.

His bags were packed. He caught the London train. He climbed laboriously into a first-class carriage. Inside it sat a man, and there was something unpleasantly familiar about the shape of him. Mike opened a paper wide, taking ambush behind it, and peered round the corner. Uncle Edgar, by jove! Uncle Edgar, Kitty's uncle who had spent a deadly Christmas with them one year. A gentleman of much stomach and little sense. Uncle Edgar would probably preach a lesson, he would not be pleased to see Mike. He would have no idea that Mike was about to re-marry Kitty. He tried to hide himself, cursing his bad luck in choosing this of all carriages.

Uncle Edgar thundered, "Excuse me, but do you mind if we have that window shut?"

Frowsty old beast! He had always been like that. Oh, Lord, thought Mike, now for it.

"Oh, it's you," said Uncle Edgar, "fancy seeing you. I thought you were in France, honeymooning? You generally were honeymooning, weren't you?"

"Was I?" asked Mike with a feeble attempt at hauteur.

They chatted. Uncle Edgar was loquacious, and he wished to be pleasant. "Such a good thing about Kitty," he boomed, "when I heard of it I said to myself, 'that's just about what I could have wished.' Excellent thing."

Mike was surprised that the news had travelled so quickly. "Glad you approve," he said icily.

"I always told her George was the man for her. So steady and decent. He will make an admirable husband. They are to be married at once, I believe, and a good thing too. Kitty was always devoted to him. No time to waste. Yes, a very good thing."

Mike found that he was not reading the paper any longer. He was not even listening to the boominings of Uncle Edgar. He was thinking of Kitty. So, although she was going to marry George, she had written like that to Mike. Kitty who kept promises. In a flash he saw what had happened, and was amazed at her self-sacrificial loyalty. Kitty would abide by her promise, even though she knew that it would ruin her whole life. What ought he to do? He racked his brain. Kitty thought that she was giving him a second chance, but honestly he was not worth it. Thoughts came and went, twisted themselves like spirals. Philanderer, butterfly thoughts, must do the decent thing, but what was the decent thing? Thought of George, reliable, obviously the man to make Kitty happy, and she wan and weary as she had looked after the divorce. Yet if she felt it her duty to give Mike a second chance nothing would deter her. Kitty was like that. She must see him, see him as he really was. Illusion left him. He was like that.

The train steamed solemnly into the station, like a puffy old woman up a steep hill.

"Ah, here we are," said Uncle Edgar, "I suppose you are going on the 'bust.' See, what was her name, Rose something or other?"

"I've got sick of her," said Mike brutally, "it's Lily now. Lily is lovely."

The phrase stuck in his mind.

"Tell Kitty, if you see her, that Lily is lovely."

Yes, that decided it. He thought of nice little scouts who do their one good deed a day, as he went into the queer pigeon-hole and wrote out his telegram.

He drew the form towards him.

"Sorry, but must go to Lily, Mike." He added as an afterthought, "Lily is lovely." Poor Kitty. She would cry a little, she would make a fuss, but in the end she would decide that he was just the same old cad, which was as he desired it to be. She would turn to George. George, with legs like a billiard table, and no brain whatever, only that dreadful, sincerity, that grim earnestness.

"And now," he told himself, "I suppose I must find Lily."

THE ART OF SINGING

OLD STYLE

In the past they used always to say:
"On your voice you should learn how to play
Like an old violin.
It is really a sin
If you sing in a casual way."

NEW STYLE

Just be natural; breathing like mine
Gives a charm that is hard to define.
I never should want to
Excel in *bel canto*,
To be flat is far more in my line.

A. W. G.

WHOM THE CAP FITS—IV

HAVING had the wherewithal to live privately in peace and comfort, I commend the patriotic spirit that induced you to live publicly on kicks and ha'pence. Particularly so as the more I see of you, the clearer the evidence that Industry was your life's mission. Nevertheless, you sold your birthright for a mess of political pottage and have most certainly lived to regret it. And yet, curiously enough, Ambition was never your spur. On the other hand you were too weak to remain obscure. Urged forward therefore by others and true to type, timidity along a middle course was your natural progression. And there's the "worm i' the bud"—even to this day. But that did not exhaust your unfitness for public life; you had yet another holy blemish! You imagined that the ordinary rules of life held good in politics; that confidence was repaid by loyalty; friendship by gratitude; honesty by dependence. Never was there a greater mistake. Disappointment enlightened your understanding, but unfortunately experience never alters character.

For the first ten years of your Parliamentary career you were "unknown and alike esteemed." It so happened, however, that the Leader of a Party not only valued your friendship but appreciated your ability, with the result that in due course you were given office.

That your early selection was criticized was in the nature of things. Still, you rode through the usual storm to a popular calm and that by force of energy, intellect and affability. There were no giants in those days. Politicians were synonymous with statesmen; debaters with orators, so that you found much favour in the land of Lilliput, being at least an inch higher than your fellows. As always happens, success attracts sycophants, but being amenable to flattery and a stranger to character, you were a boon to the political knave and a butt to the political sage. And this despite ample warning.

Nevertheless, like Charles II's Duke of Buckingham, you believed everything but the true word and followed nothing but the worst advice. In the depths of the Gulf of Mexico, where neither light nor sound penetrate, Nature has no use for eyes or ears. Can it be that in the political heights there is a similar dispensation? It would almost appear so, for you revolved with a few minor satellites, in a distant sphere "far from gay cities and the ways of men." Is it surprising that criticism and later an open revolt attended your actions? You won the day, but not the confidence of your supporters. It is late to mend, but at least make an effort to justify the confidence of those friends who, in your hour of trial stood by you; otherwise before long the extinguisher may ignite!

I hesitate to suggest your indifference to Party Government, but frankly there is much evidence of the fact, for you eschew all principles and complain of political infidelity which is the natural corollary. Again, the sovereign duty of an Opposition is to oppose, but you are for ever compromising! And as the rock basis of Conservatism is the will to conserve, how are matters advanced by upholding the phrase and avoiding the fact? Is it possible that you have visions of a league of Parties by way of allaying political strife? That at any rate would be an indication that you attach some importance to policy, though you will admit a statement of your views is rare and may I add, not always trustworthy. I find no fault with that, Nature fashions to her will.

Forgive the simile but you remind me of a ship; your cargo is excellent but you never arrive at any port. And yet what would you not give, in these

stormy days, to be safe in the harbour from which, in an evil moment, you ventured out? I am persuaded, however, that you now steer in that direction; you are wise. Still, you may rightly claim that at the outset no one was to be found more skilful to take the helm. We live in an age when small men are decried and great men do not exist. In the circumstances, therefore, if you have any wish to justify your position, take your courage in both hands, invoke the Country instead of the Constituency; patriotism instead of passion; proclaim your faith in the future instead of fear; in short, trust to the "sublime instinct of a great people" and you will find that the strongest cord in the Nation's life vibrates at the weakest touch.

ACHATES

A LETTER FROM OXFORD
[FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT]

NEW clubs are always appearing in Oxford. This term has seen the birth of three. When such a large proportion of the University has just returned from Switzerland, the reappearance of a skating club in a sturdy form is most timely. Its prospectus stated optimistically that "Long Meadow is rented by the club and usually well flooded by January." But its rebirth would not have been possible in such an ambitious way had a rink not been recently opened. The Proctors at first only allowed undergraduates to skate in the afternoons, but members of this club can now skate four evenings a week, and members of the ice hockey club can also skate on Sunday evenings. The 'Varsity ice hockey team, with its two internationals, had a most successful tour. Since its return it has beaten Princes' in the first round of the club championship.

The Film Society, which has so long been discussed, has become a reality. Its subscription is to be 10s. a term, and it will meet on alternate Sundays. Among the attractions is a lecture by Mr. Anthony Asquith and the exhibition of 'Potemkin' and 'Faust.'

The editor of the *Isis* is no longer a member of the University. He has joined the company performing at the Playhouse—an institution which is rightly increasing in popularity. In his first editorial of the term he wrote: "We on this paper found last term two very amusing subjects—the women students and the Union Society: and now some great mind has achieved a joke better than these . . . they have given us a Women's Union." It is understood that a committee has been formed and it is hoping to open its doors before the end of the term. Rooms for eating and reading are to be provided, as well as accommodation for entertaining men friends. In view of the attitude the Union Society has taken towards admitting women members, and the amenities it offers even for entertaining them, it would not have been surprising had the women behaved in a similar way. Indeed, they may do so yet: and we have not heard their plans, if any, for debating.

The Conservative Association has an interesting programme arranged. Last term three of its four speakers found that for various reasons they were unable to come. Of these, Lord Lloyd may still come down this term, and those who have definitely accepted invitations are Commander Oliver Locker-Lampson, Mr. J. C. C. Davidson, Sir William Mitchell-Thomson and Lord Stonehaven.

The O.U.D.S. have been presenting 'Hassan' at the New Theatre for a week which ends to-day. Hassan has been played by Mr. Giles Playfair, son of Sir Nigel Playfair.

The Rhodes Lectures, which were last year delivered by General Smuts, will this year be given by Professor Einstein during the Trinity Term.

THE THEATRE

TRIPARTITION

BY GILBERT WAKEFIELD

Three Flats. By Malcolm Muggeridge. 300 Club.

"THE action of the play takes place in a house converted into flats, three of which are shown on the stage simultaneously." Let me say at once that, by means of great technical skill, Mr. Muggeridge has steered his play successfully between the Scylla and Charybdis of this tripartition: Scylla being the confusion which the realism of simultaneous action in the three flats might so easily involve; Charybdis, an artificial cessation of activity in whichever two of the three flats happened temporarily not to be the object of our attention. But was anything gained by this tripartite stage, except the interest of an unusual setting and technique?

Let us examine the story and its telling. We start about 8.0 a.m. and see, as it were simultaneously, the beginning of a new day. First, Mr. Mason swallowing a hurried breakfast and departing for the City, leaving his wife to the lonely business of her domestic duties. Next, two spinster school-teachers making ready for the dreary task of instructing unappreciative children. As they depart, our attention is attracted upward to the first-floor flat, where a lazy and (forgive the word) prosaic writer is living in squalid sin with the discontented daughter of a Guildford grocer. The rest of this act continues, more or less uninterrupted, in this upstairs flat, and ends with the girl committing an imperfectly explained though not inexplicable suicide.

We do not have to crick our necks to see the first-floor flat again until the end of the play. Act II began in the spinster flat, with Mr. Mason humbly, and yet proudly, telling the more romantic of the teachers of his simple and idealistic love. This is interrupted by the writer from upstairs; he has been out all day and has now returned without his latchkey. May he wait here till his "wife" comes home? He may; but his return has been observed by Mrs. Mason, who hurries in to give him a telegram which the telegraph-boy, unable to get a reply upstairs, has left in her care. She sees her husband and proceeds to kick up the most unholy row (the colloquialism is absolutely necessary to describe this embarrassing scene), to the terror of the teacher, the amusement of the writer, and the intense annoyance of the delinquent clerk.

We now cross the hall between the ground-floor flats, following the battling Masons into their living-room, and here the brawl is continued and developed without interruption, thanks to the divided stage. But what about the other flat, where the teacher and the writer have been left behind? Mr. Muggeridge has found a natural way of avoiding an immediate continuance of the situation here. What more natural than that the teacher should retire to calm her shattered nerves in the (off-stage) privacy of her bedroom? What more natural than that the writer, left alone, should stretch himself out on the couch and fall asleep?

Act III makes use of all three flats. Mr. and Mrs. Mason patch up a temporary peace (again there is nothing "contrived"; the psychology is true, the armistice inevitable) and go off to the cinema together. The teachers entertain the writer to a pot-luck supper in the other flat; the romantic one becomes slightly intoxicated on a glass or two of unaccustomed Volnay; the writer, who is temperamentally apolastic, takes advantage of her manifest susceptibility to flattery and unconventionalism, to he-vamp her; and they depart upstairs together, to see whether the key of her ground-floor flat may not perhaps fit the lock of his first-floor dwelling. It does; they enter the darkened room; and suddenly discover the dead body of the missing "wife." The play is over. Such is the story: which, let me add,

is told entertainingly, and in some of its scenes (the Mason shindy, for example, and especially its patching-up) quite brilliantly. And the acting had that peculiar quality which so often distinguishes these special productions, giving us "real life" people instead of the attractive, but uninteresting (because familiar and conventional) stage-puppets of the so-called commercial theatre.

Some of the advantages of a tripartite stage have probably been revealed even in my hasty recapitulation of the plot: for instance, the unbroken sequence of the Mason brawl, and the avoidance of a curtain-drop between the supper-party and the short and swift finale. But I feel that the same dramatic results could have been obtained by a skilful technician without the exceptional method. Then, there were the little decorative details: e.g., the visit of a mendicant hawker, and the contrast of his reception at the different flats; the telegraph-boy knocking in vain at the door behind which we could see, though he could not, the reason why no one came to answer.

Still, the important question is really this: does this play prove that there are stories for which a three-division stage is necessary, or even advantageous? Examine the plot, and you find that the links between the flats are contrived and artificial. Mr. Muggeridge has really told three independent stories, and given them a purely fictitious, and factitious, connexion. The result was an interesting experiment, but nothing more. And it has appalling disadvantages. The upper stage is almost completely hidden from the forward stalls, by the partition which provides its floor, and the little one can see is seen in physical discomfort. The stage presents an untidy, make-shift appearance, which is somehow disconcerting to the audience. Its one peculiar advantage is that it prevents the individual drama being isolated and reminds one that the ordinary business of the world goes cynically on despite whatever tragedy may happen to ourselves. But it does these things at the sacrifice of others which still seem to me of more importance.

"SHADES OF THE PRISON HOUSE . . . UPON THE GROWING BOY"

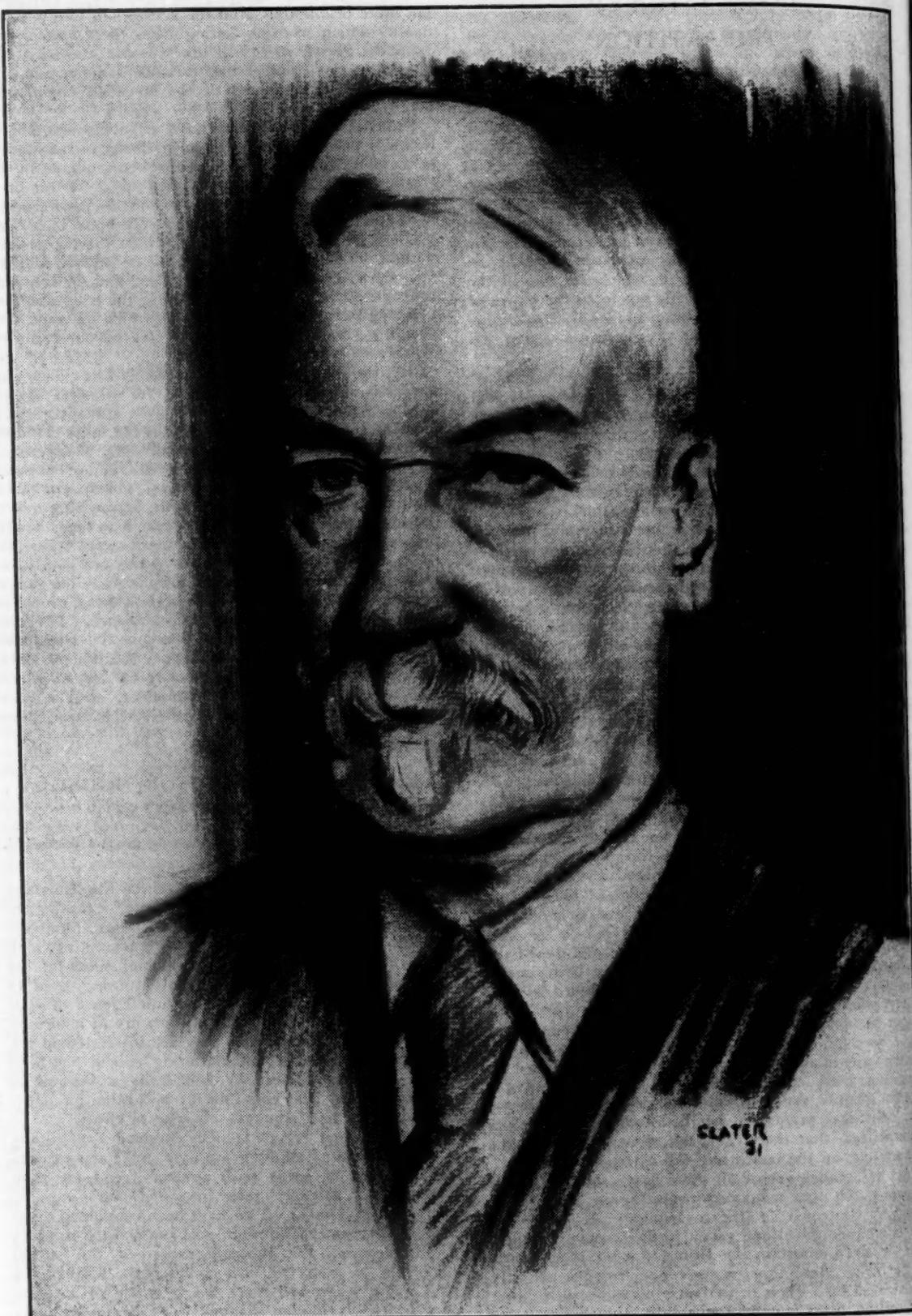
Etienne. By J. Deval. English version by Gilbert Wakefield. St. James's Theatre.

The problem of the French play on the English stage offers two solutions. You may resolutely transfer the Faubourg St. Germain to Belgrave Square, Montparnasse to Chelsea, Clichy to Kew, transmuting with infinite pains the manners, morals and minds of the inhabitants—and risk your alchemy turning gold to lead. Or you may gamble on the intelligence of your audience and offer them a faithful picture of a foreign civilization and assume that they are interested in the unfamiliar. This wise and flattering course has been chosen by Mr. Gilbert Wakefield in a version of M. Deval's play that could hardly be beaten for lightness of touch and apparent absence of effort.

The days when French comedy confined itself rigidly to the humours of adultery are over and Paris expects the intrusion of ideas with greater frequency than London. In "Etienne" three lines of thought emerge, well veiled in humour. Two have been canvassed often enough—the maternal-marital problem and the troubles of adolescence. But the suggestion of the sexual subcurrent in maternal love comes new, I fancy, to the London stage and there was a rustle of surprise when Etienne's mother slapped his face in jealousy.

Even without the participation of Miss Mary Clare and Mr. David Horne, this play would give the playgoer an interesting evening. But these artists give the St. James's Theatre claim to an immediate visit and Mr. Emlyn Williams plays the boy Etienne with a great deal of sincerity.

R. G. B.



MR. H. W. NEVINSON

THE FILMS

THE MAID AGAIN

BY MARK FORREST

Saint Joan—the Maid. Directed by Marco de Gastyne.

The Regal.

The Devil to Pay. Directed by George Fitzmaurice. The Tivoli.

JUST about three years ago Herr Karl Dreyer startled the world of the cinema by his direction of 'La Passion de Jeanne d'Arc.' His treatment of this subject was remarkable for the emphasis which he laid upon the visual image; the film being a collection of close-ups. The emotions of Jeanne, her supporters and detractors were conveyed to the audience by a superb use of the camera angle, the whole effect being considerably heightened by the fact that none of the artists was allowed to use any make-up. The drawback to this picture as a complete work of art lay in its lack of action; the film was stationary. In the new representation of this story, entitled 'Saint Joan—the Maid,' which is being shown at the Regal this week, Monsieur de Gastyne, who directs it, goes to the other extreme. Here is action and to spare; in fact, the picture never halts until Joan is captured. Both of these methods induce a feeling of unreality that springs from different causes. Under Herr Dreyer the spiritual side of the story received ample consideration, but the rest did not have much significance; under Monsieur de Gastyne the reverse takes place, though both have been content to film virtually the same incidents in her life.

The French Government has lent its support to the picture with the result that the village of Domremy, the battle scenes at Orleans and the glimpse of Rheims are all very satisfying. I am sorry that nothing is shown of the lovely little town of Chinon, but only interiors are used for the sequence when Joan appears before the Dauphin to ask for her army. In the trial scenes Monsieur de Gastyne's direction is not so sure and the photography of the burning of the Maid is disappointing. The film, however, has been extensively cut and these sequences are stronger pieces of work than are actually shown.

The picture has been synchronized, but a better effect would have been obtained if the musical accompaniment had supported the film throughout, instead of being displaced in the battle scenes by realistic noises which only succeed in disturbing the even flow of the production. Simone Genevois plays Joan of Arc, and her performance, while in great contrast to that of Madame Falconetti, who took the rôle in Herr Dreyer's version, succeeds by its simplicity. She does not convince one altogether of the spiritual side of the character, but she makes the Maid a human being and her acting has no frills to irritate one. The rest of the cast have not a great deal to do; Pierre Douvan's Bishop Cauchon is a competent piece of work, but the Dauphin of Jean Debucourt is too colourless.

At the Tivoli, 'One Heavenly Night' gives way to 'The Devil to Pay,' a comedy written especially for the screen and Ronald Colman by Mr. Frederick Lonsdale. I must say that there does not seem to be any particular difference between Mr. Lonsdale's work for the theatre and his work for the cinema, except that the latter is not as good as the former. 'The Devil to Pay' has several amusing lines, but is nothing more than a rather poor play, providing Ronald Colman with an attractive part which he plays very well. He is supported by Loretta Young, as his present, and Myrna Loy, whose name for some obscure reason is omitted from the programme, as his past. The picture depends upon its dialogue, and virtually the only concessions which the author has made to his new medium are the scenes at the Derby.

THE "SATURDAY" COMPETITIONS

NEW SERIES—XXI

A. The SATURDAY REVIEW offers a First Prize of Ten Guineas and a Second Prize of Five Guineas for the two best Essays on the proper place of Sport in the life of a modern nation.

Competitors will be expected to discuss the effect of athletics on the physical and mental development of an urbanized people, and to say whether, in their opinion, those activities are harmful when pushed to excess; and if so, why. They will also be expected to say whether in their opinion the devotion to sport in Britain has been on the whole for good or evil, and whether they consider that too much or too little attention is now paid by public opinion and the Press to this form of social activity.

Essays should be of not more than 2,000 words in length. Competitors are advised to adopt a pseudonym, and to enclose their name and address in a sealed envelope. Essays must be accompanied by a coupon, which will be found in this or any subsequent issue.

The SATURDAY REVIEW can accept no responsibility for MSS. lost or destroyed in the post.

The closing date for this Competition will be Monday, April 20, and it is hoped to publish the results in May.

B. The SATURDAY REVIEW offers a First Prize of a Guinea and a Half and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea, for a letter of apology written by the Home Secretary to another (unspecified) Cabinet Minister, whose letter he has inadvertently opened, and from the envelope of which a ticket for an Irish sweepstake guiltily obtrudes.

For this Competition no coupon will be required. The closing date will be Monday, March 2, and the results will be announced in the issue of March 14.

RESULTS OF COMPETITION XVIIb

JUDGE'S REPORT

Before the millennium arrives, things will presumably have taken many turns for the better, but woman's appreciation of manly beauty is as yet shockingly defective. Narcissus, however, is still alive. Only five entries in this competition seem to me worthy of favourable notice, and four of them are from self-confessed males. According to Wordsworth, a great poet should travel in front of men as well as at their sides, and I advise award of first prize to W. G. for having travelled ahead of women and cleared a path which they may, or may not, follow. Second prize should go to Walter Harrison as next best among the pioneers. Pibwob's verses were amusing and to the point, while James Hall submitted a remarkable prose poem from a girl to her father, on which, perhaps, a psycho-analyst could pronounce more properly than a literary critic. Finally, let me thank Amelia for her dithyramb of the ring. "What upper cuts, what deadly hooks you dealt, while, groggy, he wider and wider swung his aimless swings," is distinctly good. But I have my doubts whether even Amelia, if I could see her in the flesh, would be as delightfully feminine as she appears in manuscript.

FIRST PRIZE

Hirsute? And huge? And iron-fisted? Aye, But so are James and Ronald. Swift to slush, To pound th' opponent's scornful-grinning mug* To bloody pulp? But so are Dick and Harry. Loud-bawling in the muddied field, foulmouthed, With thousand damns to urge the fainting goofs**

* These words were revived by the English Association, in the interests of the language, c. 2131, and immediately became popular with women writers.

But so are many. What is it, my Charles,
That draws me to thy hairy bosom, while my store
Of psychic learning fades, like fairy gold?
Thy manly ignorance it is, thy oafish port!
For James and Ronald burn the midnight oil,
And Dick and Harry scribble theses strange,
As muddled as their wits. Oh, do not so!
Tread not the sacred ground! For man was made
As fleshly setting for the mental gem
That is his spouse. The foil, the oar adorn,
But leave the pen for woman's subtler hand!

W. G.

SECOND PRIZE

Richard, thy muscles are to me
as beauteous as thy boyish face,
their motion is pure poetry,
a rhythm wrought to ecstasy
of Apollonian grace.

When I behold, outstretched and taut,
those mighty arms, those steadfast hands
upon the oar, methinks the thwart
that bears thee feels 'tis richly fraught,
and proudly understands.

We watch thee poised for the dive,
a Hermes waiting Zeus' behest,
and each man fears with thee to strive,
each maiden fain would have thee wife,
thy captive self-confessed.

Not thine to toil, or crease that brow
with lines of anxious thought; such play
befits thy manhood well enow;
thy mate am I, my playmate thou
to charm my cares away.

WALTER HARRISON

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 The Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW welcomes the free expression in these columns of genuine opinion on matters of public interest, though he disclaims responsibility alike for the opinions themselves and the manner of their expression.

2 Letters on topical subjects, intended for publication the same week, should reach him on Tuesday.

HOW WE CAN HELP AUSTRALIA

SIR.—The SATURDAY REVIEW, both Editorially and in its City columns, has shown a sympathetic restraint in dealing with the very delicate financial situation in Australia, in striking contrast with the comments sometimes made in other quarters. Australia will not repudiate. That is not the British way of facing obligations. Nor would it pay her to repudiate. But she is in a plight which demands that help should be forthcoming with generous promptitude. Otherwise she will go from embarrassment to embarrassment and her recovery will be put back indefinitely.

Against the wishes of her extremists, and despite her Langs, Australia is determined to do the right thing in the right way. The Arbitration Court has decreed reduction of the crippling basic wage; drastic Government economies are to be effected; supreme efforts are to be made to adjust Budgets; the internal bondholder is to be taxed more heavily, which is tantamount to a reduction of interest, and Mr. Theodore says "Everyone must share in the sacrifices."

That is, of course, everyone living in Australia. But with Australia putting up so determined a fight within her own domestic sphere, are her creditors outside to do nothing to help her? Sir James Mitchell, the Premier of Western Australia, has said with absolute truth that loans should be brought back to a $4\frac{1}{2}$ per

cent. basis. At present Australia is paying 6 per cent., $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. and 5 per cent. on a very large proportion of her debt overseas. She is actually paying more on a small proportion. Nothing, as Sir James points out, must be done to alienate prospective investors in Australian loans, least of all the British who have their responsibilities to the Commonwealth if it is to be developed as part of the Empire.

With her currency depreciated by some 25 per cent.—a depreciation that must be corrected if trade with her is not to be destroyed—she has to find £6 5s. to discharge every £5 obligation. When, therefore, the British investor gets his dividend, he will know that Australia is being bled to pay it and his security suffers accordingly. If the interest on Australian loans, raised in this country in the last ten or twelve years, were reduced to $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., Australia would be relieved of an appreciable portion of her present burden. Wages and other costs have to come down proportionately to the fall in the cost of living. Why not interest, especially when it is a family affair?

But Australia cannot reduce interest due to the Mother Country without embarking on some measure of repudiation. It is surely up to us, the head of the family, to make a proposal and take the initiative. Cannot a movement be started by either the Government or the banks for the purpose of putting Australian securities held in Great Britain on a $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. basis? It is no idle imagining to suggest that if holders of high interest-bearing Australian stock were invited to exchange into a long-dated $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. loan, support would instantly be forthcoming, and in a very short time they would find that what they lost in interest they gained in capital, because, Australian finance being once more sound, the confidence of markets would be restored.

I am fully aware of all the arguments that financiers and others who are always dreaming of the possibility of converting Government loans will advance. They will declare it to be impossible to put Australian stock on a lower rate of interest than the Imperial Government has to pay. But if the present holders of Australian stock were willing, who is to stand in their way? Their readiness might even show Mr. Snowden how to deal with the 5 per cent. War Loan which he is so anxious to convert. The voluntary renunciation would in any case not be all loss, because on every pound sacrificed 4s. 6d. would be saved in Income Tax. The real difficulty in the way is to find the responsible person and organization to set the ball rolling. That private holders, conscious of all the move would mean to the Empire, would respond, I have no doubt. They would be willing to share in the sacrifices which every Australian has to make. A quarter of my modest investments is in Australian stock, and I for one am ready to do my bit.

I am, etc.,

A BRITON

THE RUPERT BROOKE MEMORIAL

SIR.—On Easter Sunday in the Island of Skyros, where the poet died, a statue is being unveiled as a Memorial to Rupert Brooke. But what is this thing? An ugly statue of a naked man by an Athenian sculptor. If it is meant to be like the poet, it is an insult to his beauty, and if it is not meant to be him, what is the idea of it? Are we going to allow such ugliness to commemorate the young god whose beauty of appearance as well as of poetry has become a legend?

Those who knew Rupert Brooke know that he possessed perfect symmetry of mind and body. His body was that of an athlete, young and slim, with just that touch of feminine grace that made it perfect. And who does not know the photograph in his poems showing his young, beautiful face, his high, wide forehead, and his long, wind-swept hair? There is nothing like that about this statue.

Mrs. Cornford has immortalized him as "a young Apollo, golden-haired," and in the South Seas he was known as 'Pupure' because of his fairness of countenance. He was, in fact, one of the few real poets who have looked the part.

To prove his corresponding beauty of mind it is only necessary to read 'The Great Lover' or 'Tiare Tahiti' or almost any one of his poems. His appeal is to Youth. He is pre-eminently the poet of young lovers and of young England. Not only because of his own youth, and the war legend that surrounds his name with glamour, but because of his clearness of vision, and his capacity for writing it with his own vital personality into his poems. He saw very vividly the beauty and the pathos and all the disillusionments of life that other people see only dimly, and he crystallized each vision into the thought sequence of a single sonnet. He loved greatly and he suffered much, but that only sharpened his vision. He loved the smell of things and their touch, cool or warm, and the sharpness of light and the depth of darkness.

Are we going to stand by and allow this caricature to commemorate the poet who stood "for all that laughing is and young and free"? Let Young England rise in arms to defend their hero. Let them see him honoured and not shamed.

I am, etc.,
ANOTHER POET

THE RAILWAY CRISIS

SIR.—May I make two suggestions towards improving the present deplorable position of the railways?

The first is that the companies should resume the issue of return tickets, giving a substantial saving to purchasers. I have talked this over with booking-clerks and they all agree that a lot of money is lost to the companies by the withdrawal, some years ago, of return tickets at considerably less than the double fare which now obtains. Many people, especially in the spring and summer months, go to London and return by car, who would go by rail if they could get a return ticket and effect a substantial saving—especially if the first-class fare were also reduced for the single journey. Many would travel first for the sake of the greater comfort if the first-class fare were reduced. The first-class coaches are often empty or carry only one or two passengers.

The other point is even more important. A strict limit should be placed upon the size (with length and height) and the weight of the lorries that tear along public roads, which were never made for such heavy traffic. These great vehicles depreciate the value and safety of buildings on either side of the roads. Heavy freights should be sent by rail, and a stop put to these earth-shaking lorries which are driving other modes of locomotion off the roads.

I am, etc.,
Southbourne, Hants
RAILWAY TRAVELLER

SIR.—Some years ago the railway companies did reduce their first-class fares—to their present level of approximately one and three-fifths of third-class, and their argument against the further reduction suggested in your leading article in last week's issue, would probably be that revenue would be lost. The season-ticket holder might be persuaded to transfer to "first" if unduly crowded in the "third," but the long-distance third-class passenger, who both pays far more and is far better provided for, as regards comfortably upholstered compartments, restaurant cars, and access to all the best trains, than the third-class traveller on the Continent, would not be tempted in any great number to pay even that "little more." As for the business motorist who deserted the railways after the war, he is less likely to be lured back by slight fare reductions than by increased speed, a factor which the recent Commission commended to the companies. The latter,

therefore, might be expected to lose more on those who already travel "first" than they would gain on those attracted to that class.

On the question of speed, no mention seems to have been made—or at least none appears in the Press summaries of its findings—of the agreements between some of the companies not to cut times on competitive services below a certain figure. Certain of these are reasonable: for example, the G.W.—L.N.W. two hours for the London-Birmingham non-stop run. Since this figure was fixed, the companies have been able to insert stops at Leamington and Coventry respectively, showing that two hours is not the last word for a non-stop express. (Especially would this be the case with the easier-routed and lighter L.N.W.—now L.M.S.—trains.) On the other hand it is significant that when the London-Portsmouth agreement of the South-Western and Brighton lines came to an end with their amalgamation in the Southern, the time was promptly cut by nearly twenty minutes on a seventy-four-mile run!

Again, is it absence of fear of road competition over really long distances which maintains times between London and Scotland at so great a figure? Except to Glasgow, times are on an average half-an-hour longer than before the war, and even then they were much greater than in the middle 'nineties, during the period of competition. No, there is another time-agreement, with such an ample margin that a number of trains are actually booked to arrive several minutes before the time at which they are advertised to arrive.

Another summer-time anomaly is the best time from London to Aberdeen—by an excursion train, third-class only!

Between Euston and Crewe more passengers are not allowed to travel by the fastest train, the 11.0 p.m. newspaper and mails. It would, however, be ungracious to cavil at the excellent passenger service between these points, and, indeed, on the whole, as regards main-line speeds, other than Anglo-Scottish, the British railways have every reason to be proud.

With the Commission's remarks about irksome ticket restrictions and lack of knowledge on the part of employees of cheap-ticket facilities, most persons who use the railways will agree. More than once I have had to produce a "small bill" ("further particulars see small bills") to induce a booking-clerk to issue me a ticket.

One more complaint. Why will not the companies admit that London is a tourist centre, and issue Tourist Tickets to it?

I am, etc.,
HUGH L. SIMPSON

The High School,
South Shore, Blackpool

CATHOLICS AND BIRTH CONTROL

SIR.—I am obliged to Messrs. A. P. Anderson and S. De B. for their letters in your February 14 issue. May I say there was no need for either to ascribe my letter to partisan controversial motives? True, I have written a good deal of controversy; but in this case my motive was purely one of scientific investigation.

Ever since its enactment in 1870, there have been discussions as to the exact meaning of the definition of Papal Infallibility. What Papal pronouncements come under it and what do not? This question is of interest both to Roman Catholics and to others. To the former it has importance as affecting the further question of what they are bound, and what they are not bound, to believe as part of Revelation. To non-Catholics it is important as affecting the question of what is the real extent of that creed: to which, if true, it is their duty to submit.

I need not prove in detail that real differences do exist among Roman Catholics as to what Papal

pronouncements are infallible; but, if anyone is inclined to deny that fact, let him read Dom Cuthbert Butler's recent book 'The Vatican Council.' Therein it will be seen that Cardinal Manning (a foremost advocate of the Infallibility), as soon as the Council was over, issued a pastoral saying many things come under infallibility which other equally eminent theologians said do not.

By infallible decrees the Roman Church means "parts of Revelation." That is, infallible decrees are really Words from God. It is of interest to know, surely, the difference between Words from God and words which, not being so, may come to be altered on further study. Neither can it be said that, whether actually infallible or not, Papal pronouncements are to be accepted. If they are all certainly true, then there is no difference between them in that respect, for they are all infallible. If they are not all infallible, then some may be wrong.

It would be interesting were it possible to get from Rome a statement as to whether the encyclical *Casti Conubii* is, in whole or in some sections, infallible or not; and, if it is so, but only in parts, then in what parts.

Ever since 1870, Pius IX, Leo XIII, Pius X, Benedict XV, and Pius XI have issued an immense number of encyclicals, dealing with nearly all questions of theology, politics (on the moral side), and sociology. How much infallibility, if any, is contained in them? If you bring up old mistaken pronouncements of medieval Popes, Roman Catholic theologians will at once say: "Oh, those do not come under infallibility!" Well, if medieval Popes could utter wrong pronouncements even on grave matters, why not modern Popes also? Yet every Papal pronouncement nowadays is received (as I see *The Universe* this week says of *Casti Conubii*) "in every dot and comma." Are they infallible? If some are and others not, then which are? If some are not, why deny to Roman Catholics any right of criticism?

I am, etc.,

Highbury, N.5

J. W. POYNTER

THE ABUSE OF EDUCATION

SIR,—With reference to Mr. Cousens's letter, there are one or two things I should like to say. I do not know enough about the "societies of Eastern or South Eastern Europe" to judge how much "less kindly, honest, free and sensible" they are than our own; though I should infer that they are probably considerably so, as likewise our own society a century ago. But to draw from this the deduction that this change for the better is due to—or has in fact anything to do with—the elaboration of our educational system is utterly unwarranted. It is just as likely to be due to improved economic conditions, better health and sanitation, greater facilities for transport, football, newspapers, cinemas, or a hundred and one other factors which have gone to change and expand life if not always to improve it. I could, however, just as easily argue from the analogy of certain races of Polynesia—for instance, the Samoans before they were degraded and ruined by the impact of Western civilization—that the net results of education in the "civilized white" were to produce a less friendly, less honest, less free and perhaps less sensible humanity.

Secondly, I shall never dream of defending average parents. They are just as much the slaves of imposed ideas and mechanical conventions as the trained pedagogue; and they are even more anxious to impose these ideas and modes of action on their children than is the professional teacher. The point I was trying to make is simply this, that ultimately it rests with the individual as parent to throw off these ideas and conventions. We cannot expect the teaching profession to do so. Their livelihood depends on the maintenance of these things. A priesthood will never attack their own creed.

Thirdly, I never implied that the young do not require help and protection. They not only require, they want them. There is a world of difference between trying to satisfy their wants, help them tactfully over weaknesses and deficiencies, hold the balance, where an overcrowded environment renders it necessary, between the weak and the strong, between this and attempting to impose on them a particular way of life, a particular set of requirements, or a particular set of ideas and values. Yet this is precisely what is implied by organized compulsory education as it now exists. Such is our universal educational creed, and it is begging the question to assume that it is something else.

Lastly, I should not deny that many schools provide a far richer and more satisfactory environment than many—or even most—homes. But the answer to that is not that our schools are intrinsically desirable institutions, but that our family and social life, as at present constituted, is even less desirable. The problem of the child and education is a social and economic one. Until parents can learn to organize their social life in such a way as to provide a fuller, more interesting and a more emotionally satisfactory environment than the best type of school provides, the latter will persist and grow. But it is a tremendously dangerous alternative. It may be that the family unit must be modified and changed. Economic conditions necessitate small families, and some wider unit than the family will have to be evolved to meet the requirements of a genuinely complete social and cultural life, not only from the point of view of the child but also the adult. Meanwhile our educational system rapidly develops and stabilizes itself. By the time a certain percentage of individuals, who may already be seeking a new way of life, have found methods of meeting these requirements, they will be faced with an educational machine which will steam-roller their efforts, and to criticize which will be a kind of blasphemy. As for the day ever dawning when every elementary and private school will be converted into a free children's centre, where the young can go voluntarily to get what they may not be able to get in their home environment, whether in the shape of social intercourse, books and materials, or specialized help and instruction, the possibility becomes increasingly remote. Meanwhile suggestibility and conformity are the qualities which most easily survive; adventure and creative idealism have little scope or fail. Spontaneity tends to be crushed and mechanization to triumph; thus biologically the race runs steadily down hill.

I am, etc.,

J. R. ARMSTRONG

Heath Common, Storrington

'A MODERNIST RESTATEMENT'

SIR,—I am sorry to barge in again, but Mr. Hardwick misrepresents me. If he will re-read my letter he will see that I carefully stated that my analogy was not "sufficient" but only "fairer" than his. And I only employed it to illustrate, what he does not seem to understand, that there can be a unity of nature and three distinct personalities. His analogy allows one personality and three manifestations, which is not the Christian doctrine about the Ever Blessed Trinity.

Again he denies that the fact of the Holy Trinity is a revelation from God. Who else but God can reveal His essential nature? Yet Jesus Christ did. He revealed God as Father—"when you pray say Our Father." Himself as Son—"God so loved the world that he gave His only begotten Son." "I and the Father are one" "My Father worketh hitherto and I work." "Because He made himself equal to God." And the Holy Ghost as equal to both Father and Son—e.g., the sin against the Holy Ghost. His final commission "Go you . . . baptize . . . into the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

If this is something that "grew up gradually, much in the manner of a philosophical theory," then all I can

say is I do not understand the meaning of words, and the sooner we reject anything taught about Christ during the first century the better. Mr. Hardwick is denying the divine revelation that came through Christ quite clearly and definitely, when he contends that the doctrine of the Holy Trinity is a mere philosophical theory which grew up as the result of theological discussions. He cannot understand the doctrine of the Trinity, nor can I, but that does not prove that it was not a distinct revelation from God Himself and could have come from no one else. Nor could it have come through Jesus unless He had Himself been "equal to the Father as touching His Godhead."

I am, etc.,

St. John's Vicarage,
Angell Town

F. L. H. MILLARD

TOLSTOY

SIR.—Pennialinus's reference to Tolstoy's essay on 'Shakespeare and the Drama,' obtainable only in the Oxford Press illustrated volume 'Tolstoy on Art,' is welcome, for as an Englishman brought up in the traditional reverence for Shakespeare it came as a shock to me when, in 1906, Tolstoy wrote his strenuous criticism of our great national dramatist, especially as I did not know how to meet some of his arguments. He says that a chief characteristic of good dramatic work is that the men and women presented should each speak in a characteristic manner and in a language of his own, but that Shakespeare fails in this, being so bent on theatrical effect and on affording his players fine opportunities for declamation that he thrusts into their mouths effective sayings—borrowed from Plutarch or wherever else he could pick them up—regardless of whether these speeches are suited to the characters that utter them or not; with the result that as to Hamlet, commentators and critics have for centuries been at sixes and sevens as to whether he was mad or sane, and as to what his character was or whether he really had any character left at all, after uttering the fine speeches Shakespeare had selected from his note-book.

I have always hoped that someone who understands and appreciates Shakespeare would take up the cudgels seriously on his behalf—not by misrepresenting Tolstoy's indictment, but by meeting his arguments fairly and squarely and elucidating the matters at issue. Panegyrics of Shakespeare (who should not need them) or mere denunciations of Tolstoy and disregard of the force there is in much of his intemperate attack, do not suit the case. Comparatively few Englishmen have, I fancy, read this essay, which is probably the most strenuous and closely reasoned attack ever made on Shakespeare. It is a most thoughtful argument and, coming from the author of 'War and Peace,' it should be worth a serious reply and not mere scornful denunciation.

Pennialinus's attempt to discredit the thesis of 'What is Art?' written in 1897, because he does not approve of the essay on a different theme written nine years later, is ineffective for this reason. If we set Tolstoy aside, it would still be open to any of us to appropriate his thesis and claim it as our own. Its argument would eventually have to be faced on its merit—much of it has already sunk into the minds of some of our best critics—and it would no longer be possible to confuse the issue by picking a phrase or two out of some other book of Tolstoy's.

As to Mr. Nicholson, allow me to repeat that I took exception to two specific statements: (1) that "as a boy he (Tolstoy) seduced peasant girls on his estate," and (2) that "as a young man in the society of Moscow and Petersburg he formed liaisons."

Mr. Nicholson has tacitly abandoned the second of those—for he does not attempt to substantiate

it by a single instance, but still seems inclined to hold to the first statement, though here, too, he has failed to adduce a single reliable instance. Yasnaya Polyana is but three miles from the old and frequented Moscow-Kiev highway. People, either out of curiosity or to see someone in the village or on the estate, not infrequently walk or drive from the highway to Yasnaya, and the suggestion that anyone "in pink" must have been a girl belonging to Tolstoy's estate is quite unconvincing.

Mr. Nicholson does not like the fact that Katya was not "a peasant girl on his estate," and asks whether the seduction of a servant girl in Kazan is "to be counted for righteousness." I must leave that problem to him, for if I cannot get him to see that he should not make statements for which there is no evidence, I must not discuss ethics with him, or this correspondence may stretch "from here to Mesopotamie"—or till you, Sir, stop it. For the same reason I will not attempt to rebut his suggestion that I am incapable of facing "plain evidence" owing to my "reverential attitude" and desire to serve "an aged oracle at any cost."

Where I have been able to check Mr. Nicholson's statements I find them defective, and so I hesitate to accept his statement about a "horde" of gipsies who indulged in "wild debauches" and "lived in drunkenness" at Yasnaya in 1847. Mr. Nicholson should cite some authority if he wishes us to accept that as evidence of anything.

As to Sir Edmund Gosse—he rather put himself out of court by an extraordinary utterance on the occasion of Tolstoy's eightieth birthday celebration, when in the *Contemporary Review*, with reference to one of Tolstoy's best stories—a story that has had a remarkable vogue the world over and been acclaimed as one of the most perfect little stories ever written, he wrote that: 'What Men Live By' is characteristic of the later period when the greatest novelist of Russia voluntarily sank to the level of a purveyor of Sunday School prize-books, which ought to be issued in cheap green and pink bindings, with plenty of tinsel on the sides"—a remark worthy to figure in future collections of literary and critical curiosities, but not calculated to persuade us that Sir Edmund Gosse was a competent critic of Tolstoy's literary achievements.

For members of Tolstoy's family who wanted him to dress conventionally, it was natural enough at a moment of irritation to call his clothes a "masquerade"—amenities of that kind are not infrequent in many families, and mislead nobody acquainted with the man attacked; but it is a different matter when an English critic to-day deliberately states that Tolstoy attempted "to influence the world by living as a peasant," and on being challenged as to the fact, tells us that "he masqueraded in peasant clothes," and by way of evidence of this tells us of his wife's having complained of his doing "senseless physical work."

There are three reliable and full-dress biographies of Tolstoy written by men who knew him well and stayed at Yasnaya and visited him in Moscow. They are Birukov's, Gusev's (not yet translated) and my own. These are unanimous in having nothing to do with the silly legend that he "lived like a peasant," and they are supported by the very book Mr. Nicholson was reviewing, for though Nazaroff did not know Tolstoy personally, he is quite well read on the subject and gives a generally reliable account of the main features of Tolstoy's life.

Belief in the "peasant" legend is confined to strangers, foreigners, or Russians who did not know Tolstoy but harboured a spite against him or some of his books.

I am, etc.,

AYLMER MAUDE

EMPIRE DEVELOPMENT

SIR,—The Empire Development Association has been formed to meet an urgent need—that of bringing home, not only to Governments, producers, financiers and traders, but also to the rank and file of the public both at home and overseas, the vital necessity for approaching the problem of Empire as one problem and not as a series of individual problems connected with the different parts of that Empire.

The Empire Development Association presents to the people of this country and of the Oversea Empire a broad development plan covering :

- (a) The education of the public on the subject of Empire.
- (b) The development of the resources of the Empire.
- (c) The redistribution of the white population of the Empire.

Transport systems must be extended and, where necessary, modernized; production, both primary and secondary, increased; the settlement in Oversea Empire areas of industrial and agricultural workers and their families from the United Kingdom encouraged: the flow of capital directed towards the development of the Empire; barriers to development within the Empire must be abolished where possible; and the closest contact maintained between bodies and individuals in the United Kingdom and in each Oversea Empire area.

How is this to be done? Agitation by individuals is of little practical use unless an organization exists which can keep in close touch with all developments, assist in formulating practical schemes, and influence public opinion by keeping such matters constantly in the public eye.

The Empire Development Association will :

1. Give wide publicity, by means of literature, articles in the Press, advertising, public and private meetings, broadcasting, etc., to the necessity for developing the natural and productive resources of the Empire.
2. Gather together information on practicable schemes of Empire development, and have such schemes investigated by technical advisers.
3. Obtain information as to schemes of migration and settlement, and assist Governmental and other bodies interested in the settlement of British families in the Oversea Empire. The Association is giving active support to the Amendment of the Empire Settlement Act of 1922, to enable more use to be made of the funds available.
4. Assist in the formation of, and keep contact with, similar Associations in the Oversea Empire areas, and with bodies and individuals known to be interested in Empire development from the non-political angle.
5. Obtain and collate information on industrial development in Oversea Empire areas, and encourage, where advisable, the establishment by British manufacturers of branch factories in Oversea Empire areas. It is also essential that marketing boards be established overseas in order to give wide publicity to British products.
6. Make every effort, both at Home and Overseas, to bring about periodical conferences of primary and secondary producers from every part of the Empire.

The development of the resources of the British Empire provides the solution of the problem of business depression and unemployment.

I am, etc.,

W. H. WILLSON,
(Secretary)

Empire Development Association,
Abbey House, 2 Victoria Street, S.W.1

'REAR LIGHTS'

SIR,—Thousands of cyclists are grateful to Mr. Crees for his able letter in your issue of February 14 stating the case against rear lights on cycles.

In the *Motor* a discussion took place regarding the position a rear light should occupy on a motor car. This paper pointed out that it makes very little difference, because "an overtaking vehicle is nearly always a vehicle with a fair turn of speed, and as such is provided with effective driving lights of its own, which are far more effective than the faint glimmer of a red

lamp on the tail of a vehicle in front." With this the cyclist agrees.

A car must have lights sufficient to see a pedestrian or an animal on the road. A case came before the courts in which the owner of a horse that had been run into at night and killed by a motor sued for damages. £6,000 was awarded, and Mr. Justice Shearman said: "the horse was killed by a car which did not slacken speed. It was carrying headlights which should have shown a horse in front. If the headlights did not give a proper light, and show what was in front, the defendant was riding in a car which was little more than a public nuisance."

This is the contention of cyclists. They are compelled to look out for obstructions; the motorist should have no difficulty at all in seeing ahead with his lights. I have motor-cycled hundreds of miles at night and see no justification for making pedal-cyclists carry rear-lights.

I am, etc.,

A. JEANS COURTNEY

New Cross, S.E.14

BAKERS AND FLOUR

SIR,—The huge importation of French flour into this country to which Captain Dixey directs your readers' attention is a question which housewives might help to solve by using home-milled flour.

Not only have the French and other foreign millers sold us 11,738,527 cwt. of their wheatmeal and flour in twelve months, but the foreign farmer has had the benefit of at least 5,000,000 cwt. of wheatfeed produced during the milling of it. This wheatfeed, which used to be called millers' offals, is a valuable food for all livestock; indeed, it is regarded to-day as the best obtainable for pigs and poultry.

By allowing the foreign miller to dump his flour on us we are thus depriving the British farmer, and especially the breeder of pigs and poultry, of a valuable asset in competing with imported beef, bacon, butter and eggs, of which during 1930 we purchased in all £174,968,789 worth; even a fair proportion of this sum spent at home would help to put British agriculture on its feet.

I am, etc.,

W. J. WOMERSLEY
(M.P. for Grimsby)

SUNDAY CINEMAS

SIR,—The people of this country have the right to rational recreation on Sunday as on every other day of the week, always providing that provision is made for one day's rest in seven and proper payment made to those who work on Sunday.

With these safeguards I see no reason why cinemas or any other form of rational entertainment should be forbidden on Sunday.

I am, etc.,
House of Commons

JACK JONES

TENNIS FOR SCHOOLBOYS

SIR,—I am very pleased that Lord Desborough has appealed to the public schoolboy to take up tennis as a sport.

Lawn tennis is the greatest of all outdoor games, as it requires more brain and skill work.

As an old athlete I know that it is the finest game to keep one fit. In tennis one has to think and act at once with no hesitation, and it calls for the team spirit as much as other games, and produces hardy men and women.

Lawn tennis stands right away from all other outdoor games as the greatest, the same as chess stands right away from all other indoor games as the greatest.

I am, etc.,

JAMES M. K. LUPTON

London Athletic Club

CROSS WORD PUZZLE—XVI

" HIDDEN QUOTATION "

BY MOPO

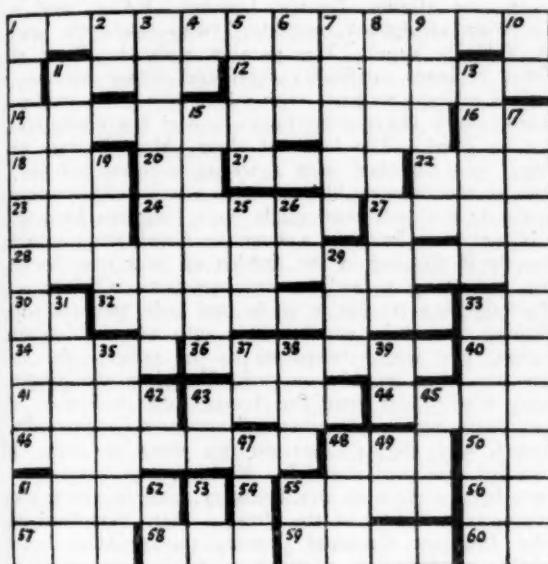
A weekly prize of any book reviewed or advertised in the current issue of the SATURDAY REVIEW, not exceeding half a guinea, will be given for the first correct solution opened. The name of the book selected must be enclosed with the solution; also the full name and correct postal address of the competitor.

Solutions must reach us not later than Thursday following publication. Envelopes must be marked "Cross Word" and addressed to the Cross Word Editor, SATURDAY REVIEW, 9 King Street, W.C.2.

The following numbers form a quotation from a translation of an Eastern poet, viz.:

54, 11a, 51d, 33d, 17, 48a, 11d,
54, 38, 51d, 21, 54, 55a, 51d, 13—58, 59,
31, 20, 46, 53d, 48a, 1d—
37, 1d, 44, 32, 5.

The clues to some of these words are missing.



Across.

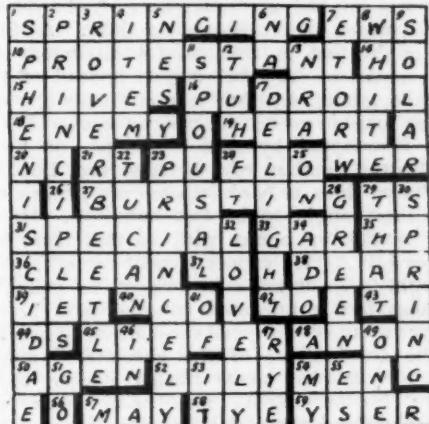
CLUES.

- "Dwindling down to — when the glittering peacock crows," and the end show the beginning's direction.
- Hyphenated to 3 I was England's old rate-book.
- Quaint and interesting city in Germany before 42.
- There is an obvious motive in this moving from place to place.
- Becomes secret when pursued by 40 reversed.
- Open the door I tell you!
- This would be suitable if 56 followed it.
- Kidney.
- When I am "phony" I am heard in auscultation.
- A form of confusion.
- This study might become expensive.
- Vain boasting, due, perhaps, to its inherent title of nobility.
- Take notice I shall snatch if I swallow 54.
- "Land o' the Leal."
- Promulgated in 1837.
- Timorous.
- About 5 miles in India.
- See 16.
- Strip the bark from a tree backwards.
- 18's opposite.
- Gild this for a composition to expiate homicide.
- This short day is without date.
- Two ravens gathered tidings for this deity.
- I form protuberances before 29.
- See 30.
- See 13.
- See 20.
- My fire is a Will-o'-the-wisp.
- 47 arranged to signify repetition.
- A bird's shank with 53d.

Down.

- 2 and 10. An informer.
- See 11a.
- Produced by the larvae of bombycide moths after 43d.
- 26 reversed makes a cobbler of me.
- One word of three.
- Drives back.
- There is a limit to this form of ruler.
- Limb or gallows.
- Half 55a is to be preferred to 2 me.
- 33d are often committed to me.
- Deck the latter end of a simpleton.
- Japanese cape.
- See 6.
- See 53a.
- See 15.
- Japanese outlaw.
- The note of the nightingale is heard in this place of punishment.
- Opposite of 10.
- See 12.
- See 4.
- 45 rev. This simple gives ownership.
- Mixed 58.
- rev. Spenser's named this.
- 55d can make me stop.
- Add ten many times.
- I'm only wanting a shilling to become a wealthy man.
- See 60.
- Stop when I've caught up with 49!

SOLUTION OF CROSS WORD PUZZLE No. XIV



QUOTATION.

O lovely lily clean, O lily springing green,
O lily bursting white, Dear lily of delight,
Spring in my heart aye,
That I may flower to men.

J. Masefield, 'The Everlasting Mercy'

NOTES.

Across.

- Stews.
- Herrick, 'To Anthea.'
- Pump.
- 'Twelfth Night,' 1, 3.
- N.C.O.
- Ort without the "O."
- Putoo.
- J. E. Flecker, 'Hassan.'
- "Horse-power" = 33,000 ft. lbs. per minute.
- Loto.
- The brothers "Dearlove" in Troy Town, by "Q."
- Teian.
- i.e., the word "ti" is part of "time."
- I 'Henry IV,' II, 4.
- Flecker, 'Hassan.'
- "Yam," which is edible, reversed.
- Lowell, 'Biglow Papers,' IV.
- Anag. of "mite."
- Nestor (tor = hill).
- i.e., wrote from right to left.
- 'Alice Through the Looking Glass.'
- R. Kipling, 'Pagett, M.P.'
- Hut upside down.
- 'Dombey and Son,' ch. 48.
- II 'Henry IV,' II, 2.
- Tennyson, 'The Blackbird.'
- 'Much Ado About Nothing.'
- The Rye-house Plot was made the excuse for beheading Sidney.
- (b)one(s) = dice.
- Goes.
- Myra.

RESULT OF CROSS WORD PUZZLE No. XIV

The winner is E. P. Trendell, 24 Dene Road, Guildford, who has chosen for his prize 'The Growing Trees,' by Ruth Manning-Sanders. (Faber and Faber, 7s. 6d.)

NEW NOVELS

BY H. C. HARWOOD

Hunger and Love. By Lionel Britton. Putnam. 7s. 6d.

The Garden. By L. A. G. Strong. Gollancz. 7s. 6d.

Tobit Transplanted. By Stella Benson. Macmillan. 7s. 6d.

An Innocent Criminal. By J. D. Beresford. Collins. 7s. 6d.

The Sensitive One. By C. H. B. Kitchin. Hogarth Press. 6s.

Miss Higgs and Her Silver Flamingo. By Richard Blake Brown. Duckworth. 7s. 6d.

Roman Holiday. By Upton Sinclair. Werner Laurie. 7s. 6d.

ARAGGEDLY trousered, stately shirted errand boy goes sniffing after beauty and power. He wants to be, as all young folk do and most believe they are, at the centre of things, but he is born on the circumference. A hard-hearted observer might treat this as a joke. A Samuel Smiles might find in this painful discontent a hot bed for ambition. A rebel might, instead of trying to win the game, say that it was a silly game and the rules ought to be radically altered. The last attitude is adopted by Arthur Phelps, or by Mr. Lionel Britton, author of 'Hunger and Love' for him. Phelps finds it hard to keep his clothes clean, so that there ought to be free laundries. He finds it hard to pick up a nice girl, so that there ought to be free love. He cannot respect himself, so that there ought to be no selves to respect, no individuals, no nothing but a universal consciousness brooding over—over whatever universal consciousnesses do brood over; the absoluteness of the absolute, I suppose. Against all that has made Phelps Phelps, the unfortunate Phelps rages; now with some slight unfairness calling these dark forces bishops, prime ministers, mayors and small tradesmen; now betraying with a poignant pathos the humiliation and sadly ineffective disgust of a clever young man who had to endure having a mind and tastes above his station as well as the usual romantic frenzy of unsatisfied and passionate, if adolescent, desires. It would be easy to make fun of this book, its dyspeptic sourness, muddled arrangement, ostentatious display of metaphysical and political bromides. It is very difficult to explain how to one reader at least it seems that behind heavy curtains of uninteresting verbiage something of the first importance has been happening. Like a flayed colt jostled by a herd of fat and foolish donkeys, Phelps flinches along the way to destruction. And he did want to know what it was all about. Perhaps members of the bourgeoisie, though Phelps would not admit it, have the same sick puzzlement as the proletariat. If so, this book is worth their attention, as a very human if too frequently coarse and tedious study of a lonely young man at odds with life.

Of this 'Hunger and Love' as a work of imaginative fiction I have less to say. The last time I entered King's Cross, it was in a train that did not light up in any of those seven—or is it nine?—tunnels. Reading was made very difficult. But then I had in the dark intervals my thoughts which, like yours, dear friend, in similar circumstances, resembled birds of paradise flying through a tropical forest. Britton's dark intervals suggest that an over-worked Bolshevik has shied a bundle of obsolete classics into the basement of a second-hand book shop. Between the tunnels Mr. Britton can be

extraordinarily good. A harsh intensity of not ignoble feeling brands the soul of the reader, the conscience, too, with lasting images. This is not a pleasant or a skilful book. It is certainly not complete in itself. But its publication is an event, as I suppose was the publication of that equally preposterous work, 'Piers Plowman.'

'The Garden' is the charming and sensitive study of the holidays spent in Ireland by a charming and sensitive little boy. The only thing I have against it is that I am not sufficiently interested to analyse why it annoyed me. It looks all right. It smells all right. I would confidently recommend it for the library lists of nine-tenths of my acquaintances. But some lack of niceness in me made me as nauseated as if I had been licked by a strange dog.

"A re-reading of the *Apocrypha*," writes Miss Stella Benson, "while I was living in Kanto, Manchuria, some years ago, seemed to me to show a curiously exact parallel between the position of the exiled Jews of Tobit's day and that of the exiled White Russians in ours." Hence 'Tobit Transplanted,' wherein with elfin grace and laughter Miss Benson mocks the refugees, and also the quite delightful Chinaman, Mr. Wilfred Chow, a "barrister from the Middle Temple London, E.C.4, and a Christian of devout morality," who takes the part of Tobias's angel. The parallel with the Book of Tobit becomes artificially rigid and rather tiresome. It is a mistake to have such jokes with one's readers behind one's characters' backs. And the characters are so good. The least of them, Mrs. Butters or Olga, just sketched with a strong economy of line, lives in the memory like someone whose acquaintance has only too well been made on a long sea journey.

If you were living in a detective novel, what would you do if digging in the garden of your new house you turned up a fairly recent skeleton? Of course, after digging on for a while and half mechanically slipping a certain small article into your waistcoat pocket, you would telephone to the police. But in real life what would you do? You like the people from whom you rent the house and remember a few years ago a daughter disappeared, supposedly eloped, and anyway you do not want to make a dreadful fuss and scandal. Besides, you happen to have been a clerk in the Treasury, and to share the bureaucrat's dislike of the Press. Mr. Beresford in 'An Innocent Criminal' treats the problem with gentle simplicity; a slight but clever and amusing tale, this.

That lust of self-sacrifice to which even good women occasionally succumb has been snubbed by Mrs. Lorna Rea in her novel not long ago reviewed on this page. Mr. Kitchin is more sympathetic with it. Margaret in 'The Sensitive One,' comely, intelligent and thirty-five, could have found more exciting things to do than look after her execrable old father and half-witted sister, neither of whom had any need for her that hirelings could not have supplied. Relieved of these burdens, she accepts one still heavier. Mr. Kitchin applauds. Her altruism has made something fine of her which a quiet self-interest would have befouled; and Mr. Kitchin persuades us that he is right. Really, I am making this sound like a Sunday school prize, when it is as clever as paint and rich with abnormal psychology, and all that.

'Miss Higgs and Her Silver Flamingo' is smart and knowing, but too synthetically so. It reminds one of the cocktails brought already mixed in flagons, or of Richard Oke imitated in deal.

In 'Roman Holiday' Mr. Sinclair compares America to-day with Rome after the Carthaginian Wars and ingeniously conveys his hero from one setting to the other. The American sections are the best, and Mr. Sinclair has done them somewhat better before. A sharp twist at the end gives this book most of its life.

REVIEWS

LORD BIRKENHEAD

Smith of Birkenhead. By H. A. Taylor. Stanley Paul. 12s. 6d.

DURING the latter half of his life Lord Birkenhead received far more flattery than is good for any man. One of his fellow benchers at Gray's Inn went so far as to proclaim in Lord Birkenhead's presence: "When the testing time of the Great War came, this young man, then almost at the head of the Bar of England, making a princely income, cast £20,000 a year to the winds and himself went to the war." If Lord Birkenhead had done this, he would have been conspicuous only for his excellent company. The real record of his war experiences is, however, very different and the author of this book gives it. Lord Birkenhead had been a Territorial officer for six years before the war and was forty-two when war broke out. "When the testing time came," he went into a civilian job as Press Censor. Late in September, 1914, he went to France, with the rank of a major of yeomanry, as Observer with the Indian Corps. He became Lieut.-Colonel (temporary), but seems to have fallen foul of his superior officers and "so Smith relinquished active service in May, 1915" and became Solicitor-General. Nine months on the Staff in France scarcely justified a public suggestion of exceptional sacrifice.

Why then the flattery at Gray's Inn? The truth is that at many points of his life Lord Birkenhead was a shark among minnows. If he had been born in London rather than in Birkenhead, his scholastic successes would never have blazoned abroad; nor would a public dinner have been held in his honour when he was made Fellow at Merton. If he had not selected a small college like Wadham, he would not have found it so easy to shine at Oxford. Similarly, if he had joined the Inner Temple and not Gray's Inn (then in the doldrums), his merits would not have been noticed so quickly and he would probably have become a Bencher when he was made Lord Chancellor, and not before. If when he entered Parliament in 1906 his party had been large, his chances to shine would have been fewer. Lord Birkenhead would in the end have won through anywhere, but it was his singular good fortune to live at critical times in small communities. He paid the penalty in being the recipient of fulsome praise and that is good for the soul of no man.

Mr. Taylor's is not a discerning biography, but he disarms criticism by saying in his introduction that it "does not analyse Lord Birkenhead's character and actions." He alludes in passing to his "private defects and failings," his extravagance, his habits as a "bon vivant," his love of alcohol and, in his later years "a certain heaviness of body"; but these things are only just mentioned. This book is merely the record of achievements. It contains many good stories, though few that are new. But it does not make the reader feel that the world is much the better for Lord Birkenhead's life.

Mr. Taylor is interesting when he advances the opinion that Lord Birkenhead made the mistake of his life in becoming Solicitor-General. "The 'F. E.' destined for leadership expired then." That step led to the Woolsack and, while in many ways Lord Birkenhead was a great Lord Chancellor, the acceptance of that office spoiled his life. He never got over the quarrel with his party after the break-up of the Coalition, which prevented his return to the Woolsack. Lord Birkenhead's later rôle as Secretary of State for India was a miserable chapter. Then came his undignified journalism and his output of books, the most remarkable feature of which was

the absence of adequate acknowledgment of the labours of those who assisted in their making. The fact is that after 1922 Lord Birkenhead kept fit only in his brain. His character, his figure, his outlook on life all deteriorated, and when a really discerning biography of him comes to be written, the last chapters will be pathetic in comparison with the brilliant opening. But as the late Lord Lincolnshire once said when talking of Lord Birkenhead, "The Almighty is a wonderful handicapper."

CLAUD MULLINS

LACONICS

Afterthoughts. By Logan Pearsall Smith. Constable. 3s. 6d.

"YOU cannot," runs the last of these aphorisms, "be too fastidious." Certainly Mr. Logan Pearsall Smith himself has always preferred the small and the exquisite to the large, the loose, the facile. In his own work he has cultivated the single thought rather than the essay; he has even been fastidious enough, in the Treasures that he has compiled, to prefer prose to verse and thereby has won the gratitude of all who have discovered for themselves what a fine art prose can be and how the reserve of its appeal lends to it, in these days, a distinction that, passing for the most part undetected, is denied to metre. Now the aphorism, the maxim, the sentence, the laconic, has a peculiarity that makes it difficult to criticize, for when a writer reduces his form to limits so exiguous, the reader has to supply a setting proportionally large. The defect of a summary assertion is that, since it allows no expansion or qualification, it must either be asserting a rule or else remarking an exception, and it places on the reader the onus of deciding which. This fact led a French critic (I think it was Jules Lemaître) to observe that the aphorist was never wrong, since, in deference to his good sense, the reader made whichever adjustment was necessary. Perhaps this explains why the only forms of aphorism which have been popular in England are the proverb (with which one agrees at sight), the witticism (which asks us only to smile), and the platitude (which saves us from thinking). The writer who asks too strenuous a collaboration from his readers does not have very many. To have the sense without the fatigue of thinking is the reason why most of us read.

To select examples of these 'Afterthoughts' I shall confine myself to those which best express the writer's point of view and which ask the least adjustment from the reader, since all that a review of such a collection can do is to convey the angle from which these observations have been taken. The humour issues in such a sentence as this:

We are told by Moralists with the plainest faces that immorality will spoil our looks.

Experience contributes the following:

There are few sorrows, however poignant, in which a good income is of no avail.

We grow with years more fragile in body, but morally stouter, and can throw off the chill of a bad conscience almost at once.

Hearts that are delicate and kind and tongues that are neither—these make the finest company in the world.

As usual, to my thinking, the most objective aphorisms are the best, the worst those in which the writer sticks pins into himself. The whole collection is the fruit of disillusion, trying to recover gaiety by a smile at its own expense. The background, the circle, the friends, and the circumstances can be inferred between the lines, but in the midst of this aridity survives a faith in the pursuit of some perfection in order that the savour of life may not be lost.

This savour, for him, would be to write a perfect prose, and, for a reason to be given in a moment, I do not think that he will reach it by writing aphorisms.

English is not the best language for that, and in the single sentence may we not detect a certain timidity, as if the writer hesitated to spread his wings? I dare to say so because from the two previous books of 'Trivia' one passage lingers in my mind: the best that Mr. Pearsall Smith has written and very unlike the rest. It was a short story called 'The Vicar of Lynch.' The author of 'Denys L'Auxerrois' would have appreciated that story, and the vein from which it was mined cannot surely have been exhausted with the finding of one such nugget? Did Mr. Pearsall Smith ever chance upon three Greek tales that were published by Blackwell a few years ago under the title of 'Alcmaeon'? If not, I think that he would enjoy them, that he might be led to similar fragments of mythology which just such an imagination as his own could run into a finished mould. "Sound is more than sense," he says truly, and the sentence has too much sense and too little sound to make it the ideal road for him. Indeed, the aphoristic style is as little gainly as a heap of bricks fallen from a wall, and Gerard Manley Hopkins in one of his most interesting letters criticized for not knowing "what prose is" those modern writers who think aloud with pen to paper because, when each thought is set down singly, there is a break of the continuity which prose should have. It scarcely seems as if more than neatness and finish were possible to the laconic, and while Mr. Pearsall Smith's are certainly neat we feel that, were he not diffident of showing his feelings, his thoughts might be dissolved in such a way as would make them touch us and at the same time achieve for him the prose that he would like "to distil."

OSBERT BURDETT

THE SOVIET ANALYSED

The White Army. By General A. Denikine. Translated by Madame Zvegintsov. Cape. 15s.

The Experiment of Bolshevism. By Arthur Feiler. Translated by J. Stenning. Allen and Unwin. 10s. 6d.

GENERAL DENIKINE'S book should hold the ordinary reader as well as the student. He was the chief participant on the White side in the campaign which he describes, a circumstance that confers authority and importance upon his work. From another aspect the book is of interest. It is a recital of tragedy on the grandest and the meanest scales possible; tragedy without limits, uniquely sublime and uniquely bestial. And the manner of its telling has appropriateness, soldierly abruptness and plain vividness, an effective medium for the expression of intimacy with horror and heroism. No kind of human strife is so cruel, so incalculable as civil war. Most western people thought that the ingenuity of atrocity was exhausted during the Great War. They had no conception of the ferociousness with which Russian fought Russian. A more frightful experience than that of the troops whom Denikine commanded could not be imagined. The second retreat in the snow from Moscow, the retreat after the White Armies had reached a point about two hundred miles from that city, was more terrible in many respects than the famous first retreat from that city.

Denikine repeated Napoleon's error. His one objective was Moscow. Lured by its magic, he marched into Russian spaciousness, making no attempt to organize his rear and ensure supplies. At one time Lenin contemplated leaving Moscow to the enemy and withdrawing into the steppe as the Russians a century before had done. But Denikine's spectacular aim and the spectacular success which he achieved for a while brought about his downfall. As he moved forward, his

forces swelled in numbers, but of necessity degenerated in morale. In the end they became a rabble, ethically indistinguishable from the Bolsheviks. When the retiring Red Armies recovered their breath, concentrated their forces, and delivered a smashing blow at Denikine, he could nowhere make a stand, and was driven back to the sea, harried as much by the enemies who appeared in his rear as by the Bolshevik troops pursuing him. It was, as I have said, Napoleon's retreat from Moscow all over again; had no railways existed, the White Army would have been devastated as completely as the Grand Army of 1812 was devastated.

General Wrangel advocated a slower and surer strategy, a sterner discipline. For this reason he came into conflict with Denikine, and to the end the two generals quarrelled with characteristic Russian venom. Denikine, with his gaze fixed upon the far-off Kremlin, wasted no time upon the discipline or the credentials of those who followed him. He gambled everything upon getting to Moscow, believing that such an achievement, if he could only bring it off, would electrify the whole of Russia and crush Bolshevism at a stroke. But by that time Russia had already perished; in its place had emerged a variety of racial entities, each struggling to realize itself and all caring nothing for the past. Masses of the population became morally leprosy, developing the vilest traits of character. Infection spread to the White Army; and finally intrigue, bickering, treachery and denunciation deprived it of fibre and prepared it for destruction. In a sense Denikine proved right. Who ruled the Kremlin ruled Russia.

From the downfall of Russia we pass to the present state of Russia. The demoralization which caused the one was, to a large extent, responsible for the other. 'The Experiment of Bolshevism' is a serious and well-written book. The author, Mr. Feiler, spent three months in Soviet Russia, and supplemented his personal observations by a certain amount of reading on the subject of Bolshevism. He is critical of the regime and strives for impartiality. Even so, his book is not altogether free from the "Sovietish" taint not uncommon in the books on Russia written by Western intelligentsia, although it is less visible in his work than in others. I do not allude to his scrupulous revelation of the good achievements of Bolshevism, for this is balanced by his equally scrupulous revelation of its bad achievements. I speak of the implication discernible on almost every page that because of its claim to be regenerating humanity Bolshevism must needs be forgiven all its foul and dirty deeds. Of the old regime and of the capitalist system generally Mr. Feiler has no such tolerance.

"Will it work? Will the gigantic experiment of Bolshevism succeed? It is presumptuous to answer this question at present with a yes or a no. Any such answer would in truth be a preconceived opinion derived not from a capacity for impartial judgment but from the belief which was held at the outset."

How characteristic this, of the flabbiness and muddled thinking of the intelligentsia! Bolshevism is a gigantic experiment. It may perhaps work. Therefore it is presumptuous to suggest otherwise, for to do so might disturb the experimenters, besides which one would look foolish if in the future it did work. Consequently we must not condemn too severely all the shortcomings, torturings, lies, forgeries and deceits of Moscow. Perhaps they are necessary for the regeneration of the world.

Mr. Feiler quotes the Bolsheviks as saying that Europe too is becoming collectivist. But he himself is no friend of collectivism. For he thinks that if the Bolshevik prognosis is correct, a new revolution must ultimately come to liberate the world from mass influence, and that Europe's choice will be the path to social justice, to human freedom and dignity. Why then is he unable to say outright that Bolshevik aims are wrong and Bolshevik methods atrocious? And why does he even contemplate the possible success of the "gigantic experiment"? And what does he mean

by success? The answers perhaps are to be found in his own assertion that the Europe of to-day is cold and colourless. Because of this coldness and colourlessness the intelligentsia is incapable of making up its mind about Russia; hence the ordinary man in the street is tempted to think, too, that perhaps there may be "something in it."

LANCELOT LAWTON

THE PHENIX OF THE DEEP

The Case for the Sea-Serpent. By R. T. Gould. Allen. 12s. 6d.

SCIENCE, alas, is not kind to the sea-serpent. The latest popular exponent of omniscience dismisses him without further ado as "the favourite marvel of the nineteenth century," annually sighted and annually explained away. But the decapod, the ten-armed cuttlefish, was once—and not so long ago—similarly dismissed as a fairy-tale by these same professors. Rightly is science slow to accept any fact as finally established, but it has not yet altogether outgrown the Aristotelian tradition of medieval days of laying down the law in the spirit of "what we don't know, isn't, and even if it is, we aren't going to admit it."

The sea-serpent, however, fortunately continues to defy science by reappearing at intervals. Ever and again it bobs up from the depths to present itself to astonished and usually unwilling audiences, sometimes of one, sometimes of many spectators. "Take me or leave me," it seems to say, "take me or leave me, but here I am!" It is not surprising that the general inclination is to leave it, though learning suffers thereby. History does not name the Columbus who discovered the first sea-serpent, but evidently the author of the Book of Job was well acquainted with the beast. It is no more possible to say who saw the last. Perhaps even at this very moment some astonished marine . . . ! The last authenticated appearance mentioned by Commander R. T. Gould—author of that exciting collection of "Oddities" published a year or two ago—occurred as recently as 1923, when a strange visitor honoured, of all places, the Thames Estuary. Commander Gould believes in the sea-serpent—or rather, not in one but in three different species. He presents the evidence of some thirty cases—the cream of ten times as many—all happening within the last two hundred years. Wherever possible he has consulted the original reports themselves, and the results are impressive. When all the accounts have been valued at their lowest, and all the possible alternatives considered, he still finds himself left with "a long-necked seal, a gigantic turtle-like creature, and a creature larger than either, and much resembling in outline and structure the *Plesiosaurus* of Mesozoic times." And why not? Not only is Commander Gould justified in suggesting that it is easier to pooh-pooh his conclusions than to explain the evidence on other lines, but it would be a sorry thing could we believe in our hearts that the sea's last depths were now plumbed, its ultimate secrets known.

The real mystery of the sea-serpent is, indeed, not whether it exists or does not exist, or the unsociable attitude of the scientists, but the refusal of the public in general to believe in it. For the public will believe in almost anything, from astrology to patent medicines, from Mr. Lloyd George to the *Daily Mail*. It will, in fact, believe whatever it is told to believe—but not the sea-serpent. Too long has the latter been made the symbol of ultimate credulity; it might better become that of incredulity. Commander Gould leaves one in no doubt at all that many a man who has seen the sea-serpent and

believed in his heart walks for the rest of his days in shame and fear lest some chance word shall betray him to derision. Yet if the beast is difficult to swallow, it is not that it is unpleasing. It has a fearsome shape but a gentle heart. It frequents the lonelier waters and as a rule flies when approached; on those rare occasions when it has seemed to pursue there is no evidence of anything more aggressive than genial curiosity.

Personally, I am not only convinced by but grateful for Commander Gould's vindication of the sea-serpent. Long may Leviathan continue to appear, the last mystery of land and sea, curved in the shape of an irreducible question-mark. May he never be caught and killed and stuffed, stretched out in the museum upon rods and stands and benches to a mere lifeless note of exclamation.

GEOFFREY WEST

BALKAN POLITICS

Recollections of a Bulgarian Diplomatist's Wife. By Anna Stancioff. With an Introduction by Lord Newton. Hutchinson. 18s.

MADAME STANCIOFF, born a French woman, is the wife of Bulgaria's best-known diplomatist. Immediately after the election of Prince Ferdinand as ruler of the then principality of Bulgaria in 1887, the author went with Princess Clementine (the mother of the Prince) to Sofia, she was a Lady-in-Waiting to Her Royal Highness for a number of years and she married M. Stancioff, the Chief of the Prince's Political Staff, in 1889. Madame Stancioff remained directly attached to the Court for a further eight years, subsequently going with her husband to represent Bulgaria in St. Petersburg, Paris and for a short time in Rome. M. Stancioff was the Bulgarian Minister in London from 1920 until 1924, but that period hardly enters into the present book.

The author obviously admired the cleverness of the Prince (she was devoted to and most intimate with Princess Clementine and Princess Marie Louise), and Russia and the Russians, as they existed before the war, have a soft spot in her heart. Moreover, while the book concludes with the entry of Bulgaria into the war, Madame Stancioff condemns and regrets a policy which has brought about reduction in size, humiliation and impoverishment to the country of her adoption.

The earlier part of the volume is particularly interesting because it deals at first hand with a period of Bulgarian history about which relatively little is known. When Madame Stancioff went to Sofia, the through railway from Paris to that capital was not yet open; the generous use of their incomes by Princess Clementine and her royal son helped to establish the dynasty, and the astuteness and family connexions of the Princess Mother did a great deal to strengthen the new ruler during the preliminary years. On the more serious side we hear that Princess Clementine and Stamboloff secured Princess Marie Louise, a daughter of Duke Robert of Bourbon-Parma, as the first wife of Prince Ferdinand, that the Constitution was altered so that the heir to the throne could be baptised a Roman Catholic and that when, for political reasons, that heir, now King Boris, was converted to the Orthodox faith, his mother was so upset that she had temporarily to leave Bulgaria.

The twenty years spent by the author and her husband in Vienna, St. Petersburg and Paris provide scope for a great deal of good material. They saw Russia and her hospitality at their best; their arrival in Paris almost coincided with the independence of Bulgaria and Her Excellency enjoyed every hour in the capital of her native country. She spent the autumn of 1914 in Bulgaria and she was convinced that, given the necessary guarantees, that country would throw

in her lot with the Allies. These impressions were communicated to M. Iswolski, the Russian Ambassador then at Bordeaux, who showed himself very hostile to any proposals concerning the so-called compensations for Bulgaria.

The book contains a great deal which is bright and vivid. Its interest and its intimacy are increased by a number of excellent photographs of and letters from those most closely concerned.

H. CHARLES WOODS

ANTHROPOLOGY MILITANT

Death Customs: An Analytical Study of Burial Rites. By E. Bendann. Kegan Paul. 12s. 6d.

HERE is such a trumpet call to battle in the opening passages of Miss Bendann's introduction to her specific study that the challenge is irresistible. One after another she submits the methods and conclusions of the various schools of anthropology to drastic criticism. Such a jettisoning of authorities has never before been seen. Diffusionists, Evolutionists, Environmentalists, etc., etc., suffer alike in the chill air of Miss Bendann's comprehensive scepticism. Theoretically Miss Bendann makes out a good case for this wholesale slaughter; but it is a little unfortunate that in her opening attack upon the comparative method of Spencer and Tylor and Frazer the illustration she gives of its alleged futility should be singularly inept:

Both in Australia and Siberia" [she writes] "we find the practice of killing individuals before they arrive at the age of decrepitude. Whereas in Australia the motives which actuate such a proceeding are the desire to get rid of the old for fear they may become burdensome to the tribe, or because of their inability to cope with the perils of a dangerous journey or on account of their concern lest the feeble fall into the hands of the enemy; in Siberia the idea is, that since life in the future world is a continuance of the same kind of existence as experienced here, it would be non-judicious to allow the deceased to perpetuate such an impaired condition of life.

Why should the comparative method fail to deal adequately with the central fact that these widely separated people eliminate their elderly relatives? What the savage does is all important, the reasons he gives for doing it are suspect. They may point to the origin of the custom; on the other hand they may be a belated excuse for it. The Australian's reasons at any rate are reasonable; the Siberian's look suspiciously like the adaptation of a primitive economic custom to a much later religious belief. If the destruction of elderly members of the community had been an aboriginal economic custom in Europe and had lingered on into our own times, may we not be sure that on being asked why they killed their grandfathers, the Englishman would have been ready with a noble, even a romantic explanation, the German would have ascribed the act to a categorical imperative, and the Frenchman, being a realist, would have told the simple truth that he did it because it had always been done and that on the whole it had answered fairly well? The comparative method fails only when the things done are incomparable. If the Siberians killed young men in their prime so that they might be young in the hereafter, then to compare the killing with that of the Australian decrepit would be absurd. Sir James Frazer is never absurd.

Again, as illustrating the weakness of the evolutionary method in assuming parallel development whenever similarities of culture occur, Miss Bendann writes:

Such evolutionists would have us believe that because many conceptions of future life have developed from dreams and hallucinations, all such ideas have the same origin. This we know to be entirely at variance with facts in the case, for such ideas may be due to many other causes.

From analysis of the concrete material we find that in some tribes of aborigines their conception of future existence was due to the appearance of the white man, inasmuch as many of the natives of Melanesia and Australia think that a white man is a ghost of some departed tribesman. . . .

This is really too naive. Obviously it is the savage's idea of ghosts that leads him to mistake a white man for a resurrected tribesman. How did the idea of ghosts arise, save via dreams and hallucinations? Unless, of course, anthropology endows the savage's ghost with objective existence?

Had Miss Bendann been less combative, one would not have stressed these slips; for, after all, her method of investigation has much to commend it. She holds the balance very fairly between the rival theories of diffusion and parallelism, and although her dictum that "whereas independent development may be assumed, diffusion must be proved" goes a little too far, it is intrinsically sound. If she had said that "whereas the possibility of independent development may generally be assumed, the possibility of diffusion must always be demonstrated," her position would have been impregnable. Her main contention, however, is that cultures are all of a piece, and that in discussing a people's attitude to death and the dead, we must also take into consideration their culture as a whole. She has therefore confined her attention to certain specific groups in Australia, Melanesia, North Siberia and India, with occasional illustrations from extraneous sources. In the mass of facts she has collected and collated, she notices first the similarities to be discovered in the beliefs and rituals and then the differences. But interesting and valuable as her historic survey undoubtedly is, her deductions therefrom are not commensurate in value, and seem to tend to the conclusion that the ultimate origin of all customs, rites and beliefs is and must remain undiscoverable. It is becoming the habit of our younger anthropologists to disparage the work of Sir James Frazer, the least dogmatic of men. We might more easily forgive their summary rejections of his tentative conclusions, if in their own work we discovered something of his graces of style, clarity of thought, lucidity of expression, and refreshing sense of humour.

FRANK A. CLEMENT

A GOOD GUIDE

The Englishman and His Books in the Early Nineteenth Century. By Amy Cruise. With 32 illustrations. Harrap. 7s. 6d.

MRS. CRUISE has written a very amusing and instructive book on the literary and dramatic world between 1790 and 1830. She knows her period well and, having the good sense to see that the reader soon tires of lists of names and potted biographies, she gives us a series of scenes and presents her characters vividly. Thus a "short, thickset, fair youth" turns out to be Macaulay and a "tall, yellow-haired, blue-eyed boy" who came from Harrow and did well at Christ Church is Peel. The book ranges from lords and dandies to Place, the small tailor, whose reading was mostly severe, including those political economists whom, as Bagehot says, no real gentleman, in his secret soul, was ever sorry for. The young gentlemen in those days were great on poetry and Cambridge sent three of them to Oxford to plead for Shelley as above Byron. Sunderland, the best speaker, was the original of Tennyson's remarkable study, 'A Character,' and later went off his head. Truth to tell, it was a thin time for the writers now valued and the proprietor of the Minerva Press became rich. A wise teacher will use Mrs. Cruise's book, but he will have to add or emphasize the reasons for the success of

pedantry and twaddle. In fiction the alliance of sentimentality and "improving" adventure was irresistible. Poetry of a vital sort struggled long for recognition and authors were judged not by the merits of their work but by their political associates and their adherence to sound morality. The *Quarterly* saw that Tennyson could write, but was for many years dubious about his position as a Christian. Mrs. Cruise has not mentioned the best-seller in verse of 1800, 'The Pursuits of Literature,' a satire in Popian couplets of incredible dullness. Mathias, the author, was proud of his learning. In the year when the 'Lyrical Ballads' appeared, his eighth edition took 179 pages to explain his footnotes in Greek and Latin! But he was sound on the constitution and abused the revolutionary Holcroft, whose play, 'The Road to Ruin,' supplies here an excellent scene at the theatre.

The revolutionaries, Benthamites and other world-improvers added little to literature. But Mrs. Cruise, as she has dwelt on Godwin's 'Political Justice,' might have noticed also his 'Caleb Williams,' which, though designed as a comment on the wrongs of society, foreshadows with its secret crime and the unfortunate discoverer of it the detective story. There is a good view of the *Edinburgh* and the wicked, chaffing young men of *Blackwood*. Lord Cockburn in his 'Memorials' thinks Scott ought to have stopped the abuse of the poor, dear Whigs, though they were unfair enough themselves in the *Edinburgh*. All parties plied malicious pens. The duels which killed the editor of the *London Magazine* and Sir Alexander, the son of Boswell, show how personalities in print were resented. Hazlitt gave in abuse as much as he got, and it is surprising that he was able to lecture in London. The chapter on lecturing reminds us that Lamb would not encourage by his presence even a performing friend. To-day, such talk is an American rather than an English habit, a strange passion out of which English authors of repute suck no small advantage. A pleasant chapter is devoted to Scott, who was a great pioneer of the better sort of fiction. When the *Waverley* series ended, the annual output of novels had immensely increased. Mrs. Cruise has slipped over the name of Steenie Mucklebackit in the 'Antiquary,' but usually she maintains a good level of accuracy as well as liveliness. I note that Edinburgh produced an "omnibus" book from the Border Press of Ballantyne in 1823. Nine more or less famous novels, including two of Sterne's, 'Rasselias' and the 'Vicar of Wakefield,' appeared under one cover with sensible introductions from Abbotsford.

Mrs. Cruise freely minglest characters from fiction with real people, which adds to the readability of her book but may puzzle some people. Who, to-day, has heard of Mary Brunton? One of her heroines, I remember, "never used a looking-glass, unless for the obvious purpose of arranging her dress" and so "was insensible of the celestial charm which expression added to her face."

The illustrations are well chosen and begin with Gilray's view of a female party agitated by a Tale of Mystery and Horror. VERNON RENDALL

NANSEN'S FAREWELL

Through the Caucasus to the Volga. By Fridtjof Nansen. Allen and Unwin. 12s. 6d.

THIS charming volume is Dr. Nansen's last work; it was first published in 1929, and is well translated from the Norwegian by Mr. G. C. Wheeler. The book is the record of a journey made by the writer over the Caucasus mountains and up the Volga. He describes the peoples he met and their customs, the scenery of the mountains and life on the mightiest of Russian rivers.

Dr. Nansen had spent the summer of 1925 in Armenia, engaged on behalf of the League of Nations in organizing relief among the suffering population of that country—experiences he has already related in his 'Armenia and the Near East.' The present book tells of the return journey made by way of the republics of Georgia and Daghestan, and the Caspian Sea. Georgia is one of the oldest kingdoms in the world, and the mountain tribesmen who inhabit it still follow the old customs and superstitions of the Middle Ages. Thus, they always go armed when out of doors, usually with shield, sword, dagger and musket, so as to be ready to defend themselves if attacked. Nominally Christians, they continue to remain more or less heathen, and still worship the gods and spirits of nature. Blood sacrifices are indulged in, and men obtain their wives by capture. This is not surprising, for the mountain wall of the Caucasus has prevented the wanderings of the peoples from both south and north and has left them enclosed in a little world of their own. The writer proceeded to Daghestan, and vividly describes his excursions in this little-known mountain republic. On one occasion he saw the great swarms of locusts which destroy the maize fields. They "rose up like dark, billowy clouds, and one understood how they can cover the sky in dense masses and darken the sun." By way of the Caspian Sea Dr. Nansen reached Astrakhan and proceeded by steamer up the Volga. In picturesque phrases he paints the "splendid, lazy life" he led on his journey up the river, watching the unceasing movement of innumerable ships, boats and rafts, and gliding past the villages with their great white churches and high domes. And, when darkness had fallen, and water and plane lay dreaming under the starry vault, he would hear the plaintive Russian music and songs, "Volga, thou art deep and great, Volga, thou art mother of all."

4

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More Memories and Musings. By the Rt. Rev. Sir D. O. Hunter-Blair. Burns, Oates and Washbourne. 7s. 6d.

CARPETS, heraldry, howlers, Cornwall, sundials, passion plays, revolutions, pseudonyms, buried treasure—these few out of dozens of subjects may give an idea of the contents of this book, and of the catholicity of the interests of its aged author, the noted Roman Catholic cleric who is both Abbot of Dunfermline and "Nestor" of the *Catholic Times*. The world to him is still full of a number of things worth comment; and that comment is made out of a richly stored memory—stored not only with academic knowledge but with world-wide experience.

Here are memories of the Passion Play at Ober-Ambergau fifty years ago, long before it was the objective of Cook's tourists; and of Boulogne in the last days of the Second Empire—long, long before the habits and needs of one-day excursionists induced Boulogne shopkeepers to put in their windows such notices as one seen by this traveller more than fifty years afterwards: "Messrs. the Britannic tourists who arrive furnished with their own provisions may eat them here gratuitously."

And memories of Rome about as long ago can point for him one striking contrast between then and now—between the former yearly benediction, in a field outside the city, of all the Roman carriage and cab horses and the present-day equivalent of that ceremony—the bestowal of the Papal blessing on an enormous pack of motor-cars! Indeed, this book, with its remarkably clear recollections of happenings, public and private, of fifty and sixty years ago makes one marvel again at the changes in half a century. There seems some truth in the jesting of Bright Young Things of to-day when they speak of the time when their parents were young as the Middle Ages.

One's principal criticism of this book is that it has no index. If it had, it might serve not only for the pleasant and profitable passing of idle half-hours (it makes a very good bed book of its kind) but also as a useful work of reference. Then one might consult it, and without disappointment, for information on such subjects as the origin of famous quotations, the history of Prinknash Priory or Lulworth Castle, great Victorian singers, the Scottish Martyrs, pseudonyms of famous authors and that remarkable relic, the Hand of St. James. Who else could say, off-hand, where that relic is to be seen to-day?

SHORTER NOTICES

Africa View. By Julian Huxley. Chatto and Windus. 15s.

"REALITY is a powerful solvent," Mr. Julian Huxley confesses. He went on his mission to East Central Africa to advise the Colonial Office upon certain aspects of native education and this fascinating and penetrating account of what he saw and heard resolves itself in large measure into a confession that certain aspects of his own education were not wholly in keeping with reality. "If contact with a bit of the British Colonial Empire has not yet made me a full-blooded devotee of *Kiplingismus*, it has certainly shown me a way to the spirit of Liberal Imperialism." He has at least learned that the man on the spot is accomplishing things which entitle him to more consideration than he generally gets from superior people in armchairs at home. Mr. Huxley's pictures of the African scene, with the slender streak of white begin-

ning to qualify the ebony, are vivid and profoundly interesting. Central Africa for him has not yet taken the step from barbarism to civilization: "It is the one major region of the world still free to achieve a new civilization without destroying the old. And I see England as the country which has the greatest opportunity of helping Africa towards such a future." British commercial and industrial prosperity may die out, but "England"—England we note—may "remain as the director of an Empire" with her faculty for turning out first-rate administrators. A pleasing and satisfying reflection, no doubt, to Lord Passfield and his colleagues!

Germany and the Germans. By Eugen Diesel. Macmillan. 10s. 6d.

AS a clear and comprehensive study of German history, life and character, Dr. Diesel's book is particularly welcome. After discussing the country and the towns, the work, education and religion of the people, Dr. Diesel devotes an important section to the new Germany that has arisen since the overthrow of the Hohenzollerns. He shows that Prussian Imperialism was but a phase in the history of Germany, and only after its collapse was it possible to realize the forced and unnatural way it was held together. It was a tragic attempt to bring coherence and unity to German life after centuries of confusion. The writer points to evidences of the new spirit that is beginning to stir on every side, a spirit which realizes that "to think in terms of the old frontiers and national barriers is to shut one's eyes to the real position of things in the world to-day, for they were the product of conditions that now no longer exist. We must think . . . as members of the Super-State, to which we all belong, whether we like it or not."

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Walter Blay, City Man. By H. F. Smalman-Smith. 7s. 6d.

THE business man looks down upon the profession of letters; and, no doubt in revenge, the novelist has generally refused romance to the business man. Hence the City man as lover is a rare bird in fiction; though he may be allowed to appear as the condemned husband of some beautiful woman who uses his house and his income to entertain her friends, or, as a special favour, he may be introduced as the rich and absurd parent of young people who occasionally say a kind word to him when they meet on the stairs, as they go up to bed and he comes down to breakfast. Mr. Smalman-Smith, as a business man himself, knows that this is all wrong, and has here set out to demonstrate that a quite nice girl may love a manufacturer for himself alone, and find all the excitement in life she desires in watching him fight a rival firm that seeks to ruin him. It is Mr. Smalman-Smith's achievement that he makes the great financial fight with which his story concludes both realistic and exciting.

Hell in the Foreign Legion. By Ernst F. Löhndorf. Allen and Unwin. 8s. 6d.

THE most lurid part of this book is the title. 'Hell in the Legion,' indeed, is more concerned with the Legion than with Hell. Feverishly over-written though this cinematographic story is, and full though it may be of dots and dashes and the other recognized tricks of the trade, the author does seem to have attempted to give a genuine picture of his experiences, and if he strives for effect, it is largely because those experiences would have been unbearable had not his feelings found some relief in expression. The coprological element is not dwelt upon; and full of squalor though the story is, there is no calculated and self-conscious lingering, as there might easily have been, upon the filthy side. Just so much as is necessary to his picture on the scale of impressiveness he planned the author touches on it; and considering what that scale is, his restraint must be regarded as, on the whole, surprising. The description is splashed on in poster-colour, and the book is instinct with the philosophy of the rolling-stone.

Of the Legion itself Mr. Löhndorf says in his introduction:

A man in the Legion may experience nothing whatever worth noting. Another may experience a little; a third may perhaps go beyond that; while the rest, the numerous rest, of whom nothing is heard . . . experience far too much, but nobody can tell about them, for the Sahara or the sombre mountains of the great Atlas country swallow them up without a trace.

Apparently there are fewer Beau Gestes in the Foreign Legion than we have been led to imagine. The effect of this book, on the whole, is more depressing than exciting.

Great Comic Scenes from English Literature. Selected by L. Oliphant. Gregg. 7s. 6d.

THE choosing of comic scenes for an anthology is at best a thankless and difficult task. It is easy to question the inclusion of this scene, the exclusion of that, but Mr. Oliphant has done his work well and has chosen some of the admittedly greatest comic scenes in our literature. It is, perhaps, unfortunate that he has been over-guided by generations of critics and readers, and has failed to discover a single unknown comic scene for our enjoyment. He begins with Shakespeare—not Chaucer—and to have omitted the comic genius of Sir Toby Belch and Sir Andrew Aguecheek would in all probability have been called in question, but still remembering his lesson, he laboriously includes Mr. Pepys, Addison's Sir Roger, Mrs. Malaprop, Sir Fretful Plagiary, Mrs. Gamp, and a host of others of equal comic fame. But this is Mr. Oliphant's anthology, and as such is a companionable book and a very pleasant addition to the guest room.

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ART NOTES AN INDEFATIGABLE MODERN

BY ADRIAN BURY

MR. ROGER FRY is well known to an eclectic world as a painter and writer on art. We have read much that he has written and found it on the whole learned and stimulating. He has those convictions without which criticism degenerates into philosophy or imaginative rhetoric. Mr. Fry is the elegant herald of modernism in art, and every new movement finds him in the vanguard with explanations and not infrequently praise.

He has lately introduced us, in a pretentious volume, to the work of Matisse, the most advanced and to some of us the least interesting artist alive, and his treatise contains such a sentence as

The Persian rug which he paints for us will function equally well as a vision of an idealized space and the equivoque gains thereby a new evocative potential.

It would not be fair to say that this is typical of Mr. Fry's writing, but it does reveal an attitude towards pictures which makes them somewhat mysterious and rather precious.

The moderns have tried to do something different, something new, and the art criticism relating to them is often as obscure as the works themselves.

We must credit Mr. Fry with consistency in his dislike of the academic, for having helped us to see the beauty of the Post-Impressionists when the world was abusing and laughing at them, and for having attacked the worst kind of mediocrity in representational art. Nevertheless, we sometimes feel that Mr. Fry would have been happy if the great Italian revival of art from the fourteenth to the sixteenth century had not existed, but we are inclined to wonder what sort of art Europe would have had but for this tremendous effort, and whether it would have been any better.

We shall always deplore the fact that modernism in art is generally the excuse for bad drawing, and for our part we would rather that a man draw as well as Leonardo than as mystically as Picasso.

Mr. Fry is in a stronger position than the average critic because he is not only a fair draughtsman but knows how to handle paint with considerable technique. We read the somewhat disarming preface to his pictures now on exhibition at the Cooling Galleries with sympathy. When an artist says, in regard to his work, that " Apart from any definite achievement it may claim some interest as a record of trial and error during forty years," we are assured that his is a conscientious personality. And Mr. Fry's work is undoubtedly a sincere effort to find what he calls a " guiding principle."

But we are none the less certain that he has not found it, for the simple reason that he has been guided by too many principles. His influences have entirely submerged him. We are only confronted with ghosts of Cézanne, Van Gogh, and others.

Mr. Fry at various moments paints like various artists, and while he is convinced that the academic is

unworthy, we are never quite sure what he intends to put in its place. We do not doubt that Mr. Fry would have a very recondite answer to our charge that his two pictures Spanish and French Baroque are representational to the point of dullness. We are only relieved to see that he can draw a tiled floor in perspective with infinite care and put in a seated figure of an old woman with conventional accuracy. It is interesting to note that these paintings and the one of 'Vaison' were produced as recently as 1924 and 1926.

If we compare the portrait of Mr. B. Nichols painted in 1926 with the one of Mr. Edward Carpenter painted in 1895, we detect hardly any difference either in the handling of paint or in the psychological approach to the subject. The portrait of Professor J. M. Keynes (1917) with its bright colour, casual pose and caricature of a face is far more vivid, and the one of Miss Sitwell and his self-portrait are attractive, and quite admirable likenesses.

We could pick out several beautiful things in this collection, nor cavil at the fact that Mr. Fry's work is so reminiscent of the gods he worships. His exhibition is important, as it is a test of what happens to a devotee of modernism. We have seen what happens to those painters who have pinned their faith to the Renaissance. The best of them are well able to enliven the old ideals.

Whether painting is going forward to some new style, something that will make Post-Impressionism look as old-fashioned as a picture of the Italian decadence, it is too early to say, but we firmly believe that the way is not through the rhythmical inconstancy and automatic pink of Matisse.

Variations on the Renaissance have lasted for over four hundred years and their vitality is only too patent when we compare them with the variations on Cézanne, Van Gogh and Gauguin. As for some of the very latest exponents of modern French art, we feel that they are incapable of variation or development of any kind, and, not without justice, that they are invariably stupid.

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4. Envelopes must be marked "Acrostic" and addressed to the Acrostic Editor, SATURDAY REVIEW, 9 King Street, London, W.C.2.
5. Solutions must reach us not later than the Thursday following the date of publication.
6. Ties will be decided by lot.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 464

(CLOSING DATE: First post Thursday, February 26)

A LONDON PARK AND PROMENADE, OR WALK,
WHERE MERRY CHARLES'S GHOST PERCHANCE MAY STALK.

1. Low-bred, of gentlefolk he apes the ways.
2. Mark where our dead were laid in far-off days.
3. Out of your hat a rabbit he'll produce.
4. Seamen not this men see are of small use.
5. Sublime and stately with a joke at heart.
6. Finished with care. The salt you'll please dispart.
7. May overtop in time yon lofty oak.
8. Records wise words that sage and prophet spoke.
9. Here Youth was seen when Pleasure held the tiller.
10. Breeds cats and goats as white as any miller.
11. Implies the useful power of saying No.
12. Frail shallop of the dauntless Eskimo.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 462

MATERIALS FOR FENCES HERE YOU'LL FIND,
METAL AND WOOD: MAY ONE BE TO YOUR MIND!

1. Wounded I'm dangerous: let your aim be true.
2. Extract his heart who schemed to hang a Jew.
3. Behold the gathered produce of the field.
4. Great floods of this but small result may yield.
5. E'en such a one the meekest mortal killed.
6. Stands yet: the prophet's word was not fulfilled.
7. Men fall and rise, I downwards go for ever.
8. A tumult from that faithless follower sever.
9. See her with tears her dear departed mourn!
10. Such is a road that has nor goal nor bourn.

Solution of Acrostic No. 462

B	uffal	O ¹	1 A wounded buffalo has often been the
H	m	An ²	death of the hunter.
R	ic	K	2 Esther vi, 4.
B	abbl	E	3 Exod. ii, 12 and Num. xii, 3.
E	gyptia	N ³	4 Isaiah xvii, 1.
D	amascu	S ⁴	
W	aterfal	L	
I	sc	Ariot	
R	elic	T	
E	ndles	S	

ACROSTIC No. 462.—The winner is "Tyro," Lt.-Colonel G. D. Symonds, Ileden House, Kingston, nr. Canterbury, who has selected as his prize 'A Journal of My Journey to Paris in the year 1765,' by the Rev. William Cole, published by Constable and reviewed by Osbert Burdett in our columns on February 7 under the title 'Eighteenth Century France.' Thirteen other competitors named this book.

ALSO CORRECT.—A. E., Ali, Mrs. Rosa H. Boothroyd, Boskeris, Mrs. Robt. Brown, Clam, Gean, Glamis, T. Hartland, Iago, Lilian, Madge, Martha, Lady Mottram, F. M. Petty, Rho Kappa, Shorwell, Sisyphus, Speen, St. Ives, H. M. Vaughan, C. J. Warden.

ONE LIGHT WRONG.—E. Barrett, A. de V. Blathwayt, Bolo, Boris, Charles G. Box, Ruth Carrick, Carlton, Bertram R. Carter, Miss Carter, Maud Crowther, D. L., Jeff, Met, George W. Miller, N. O. Sellam, Penelope, Peter, Rabbits, Stucco, Mrs. Violet G. Wilson.

TWO LIGHTS WRONG.—Farsdon, M. Milne. All others more. Light 4 baffled 15 solvers; Light 5, 4; Light 7, 3; Light 2, 2; Lights 1, 3 and 6, 1.

ACROSTIC No. 461.—One Light wrong: Barberry.

A. de V. BLATHWAYT.—Enquiries shall be made at once.

THIS WEEK

Can We believe in Answers to Prayer?

By CHANCELLOR R. A. CAMPBELL

Faith and Witness of the Church

By the BISHOP OF WINCHESTER

Undergraduates and Religion

Dr. TEMPLE'S Oxford Mission

The Church and Evangelism

By GEORGE BUCHANAN

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D. H. Lawrence and M. L. Skinner. The Boy in the Bush. 1924. 7s. 6d. for 4s.

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THE CITY

Lombard Street, Thursday

IT is not surprising that the investing public are suffering from a bad attack of political nerves. Mr. Snowden's speech in the Economy Debate had been welcomed, it contained nothing that the City did not already know, and it was felt that Mr. Snowden was wording a warning to his own followers rather than to the rest of the country. Mr. Snowden's references to the necessity of sacrifices being borne by those best able to bear them gave food for thought in the City as to his precise intentions. Consideration led the City to believe that, although Mr. Snowden admitted industry could not bear any further taxation, he proposed to meet his deficit possibly by increasing surtax, augmenting death duties and raiding the Sinking Fund, any of which steps would have been sufficient to depress the gilt-edged market. Mr. Lloyd George's attack on the City, however, proved the deciding factor, with the result that gilt-edged prices suffered a very severe fall, and, at all events, for the time being confidence is again very seriously shaken. The position was not assisted by the immediate depreciation in the dollar value of sterling. There can be little doubt that the financial policy adopted by the present Government, coupled with Mr. Lloyd George's return to his pre-war Limehouse type of oratory, has accelerated the flight from sterling which has been going on for some months. It is understood that many men of means are endeavouring to safeguard their future by selling sterling securities and re-investing in those with a dollar denomination, a movement which cannot be looked upon with surprise, although, naturally, it is a cause for considerable regret. The gilt-edged market was particularly susceptible, in view of the fact that prices had reached unwarranted levels. Gilt-edged stocks were showing a yield only justified if extreme confidence were felt in the financial outlook for the country; obviously, this was not the case, the anomaly being caused by a glut of money with no other outlet for investment. Further, during recent months the suggestion has been freely broadcasted that the Chancellor was on the verge of issuing a Conversion Scheme to holders of War Loan 5 per cent., and it was felt that this would lead to a substantial appreciation of existing counters. As the result of last week's speeches, any voluntary Conversion Scheme, entailing a material saving to the Treasury in the form of reduced interest charges, appears to have disappeared, with the result that many of those who purchased gilt-edged securities in a semi-speculative mood, with the object of snatching a profit when the Conversion Scheme was issued, turned sellers. It is difficult to foreshadow any improvement in the position until after the Budget, unless in the interval Mr. Snowden announces the methods he proposes to employ to bridge the exceptional deficit with which it is felt certain he will be faced. Further, markets are likely to suffer between now and Budget day from the bugbear of uncertainty, and many industrial shares are likely to become very doubtful markets through fear that the commodities they produce will receive budgetary attention. This has already been clearly indicated in the tobacco and brewery markets, two industries which so far appear to have been able to withstand satisfactorily the general depression.

CABLES AND WIRELESS

Holders of the 5½ per cent. cumulative preference stock of Cables and Wireless Limited will have been reassured by the official announcement indicating that their half year's interest is to be paid on the due date, March 31 next. When the report of Cables and Wireless Limited for 1930 is issued, it is bound to make a very unfavourable showing. At the same time, it is felt that this company, more than any other, will reflect quickly the improvement which is expected in international conditions and so it is suggested that this preference stock constitutes a promising speculative investment to lock away at the present level for a year or two. When once the world reverts to normal conditions, this Cables and Wireless 5½ per cent. may be standing at least twenty points higher than the level at which it is obtainable to-day.

COURTAULDS

Uncertainty as to the final dividend of Courtaulds Limited is now set at rest by the announcement that shareholders are to receive a final dividend of 3 per cent., making 6 per cent. free of tax for the year, which compares with 10 per cent. for 1929 and 15 per cent. for 1928. The preliminary figures published by Courtaulds contained two surprises. The first, that it had been deemed necessary to write down the value of Continental investments by almost £1,000,000: the second, that the directors had thought it desirable to reduce the carry forward by nearly £500,000 to enable them to declare a final dividend of 3 per cent. In view of the very conservative policy adopted by this company in the past, it would appear possible that either those responsible are hopeful that they have seen the worst in the Rayon industry, or that they now deem they have written down their Continental investments to a bedrock level. The forthcoming meeting will be awaited with great interest.

CHARTERED

The announcement recently made that shareholders in the British South Africa Company (Chartered) were to receive their usual dividend of 8½ per cent. but no bonus did not cause any great surprise, as scrutiny of the figures for the year ended September 30, 1929, showed that half the profits had been obtained from the realization of investments, and it was appreciated that during 1930 such operations must have become almost impossible. The report now issued shows this to have been correct. There is a speculative value attached to Chartered shares by virtue of the company's very considerable interest in the Northern Rhodesia copper field, of which so much has been said, and so far so little has been achieved. The field is, however, believed to have great mineral wealth, and while in no way agreeing with the terms of eulogistic optimism in which its prospects are described by the insiders, it is felt that the money which is being expended in its exploitation should prove beneficial to the Chartered Company, and should one or two of the companies in the field meet with anything in the nature of success, the Chartered Company should materially benefit by virtue of its shareholdings. Considering these circumstances, speculative investors who hold Chartered shares might be well advised to retain their interests, despite the fact that at the present level only a low yield is shown on last year's dividend distribution.

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Company Meeting

BOVRIL LTD.

TAXATION THAT RECOILS ON BRITISH EXPORT BUSINESS

Presiding at the Thirty-fourth Annual General Meeting of Bovril Ltd., held in London, the Lord Luke of Pavenham (Chairman) said that the directors met the shareholders again with pleasure and were able to present a satisfactory Report and set of Accounts.

MILLION ACRE CATTLE FARM

Inspecting the Argentine Estates of Bovril meant travelling by train, boat and car some thousands of miles, because not only were the Estates well over a million acres in extent, but they were spread over seven Provinces and Territories of the Argentine, which had an area equal to Italy, Switzerland, Austria, Germany, Belgium and Holland, if compared with a contiguous block in the middle of Europe.

Each of the countries in which he had been during the last eighteen months, Australia, New Zealand, North America, Brazil and the Argentine, seemed to think it had more than its share of the troubles incidental to the present depression, and Argentina was probably feeling it particularly because it had had such a long period of wonderful prosperity.

HOW INCOME TAX AFFECTS BRITISH EXPORTS

This island of Britain was not a spot selected by Providence on which to give over 40,000,000 people an easy time; it was, in fact, a remarkable historical phenomenon that so many people had been kept here in greater comfort than in most other parts of the world. The industry and energy of previous generations had built up a great export trade, and by their savings, a store of investments abroad—it was only with the receipts from exports and interest on overseas investments that food and comfort generally could be brought into this island. They had been warned that, owing to high costs, their export trade had decreased, but little had been said of the fact that their investments abroad were becoming denationalized. A company registered here had to pay not only the taxes of the country in which it worked, but also the taxes of this country. This double burden was becoming greater than they could bear, if they were to compete successfully with local companies, and so, gradually, great concerns operating abroad were being transferred to companies registered in the countries in which they carried on business, thus saving English taxation on their reserves, on depreciation, and in fact on all except the dividends remitted to shareholders who happened to live here.

DRIVING COMPANIES TO REGISTER ABROAD

The only thing that kept the majority of such companies still here was the prejudice or patriotism of those who controlled them, but excessive taxation would strangle this altruistic control and would loosen the ropes that bound these valuable assets to this country.

In the case of the Argentine alone, three great companies (involving several millions of capital), for long registered here, and paying income tax in this country, had during the last six months dropped their connexion here, and registered local Argentine companies to take over their businesses in that country.

BRITISH CONTROL HELPS BRITISH EXPORTS.

It was not only the income tax that was lost to this country—a British company, trading overseas, controlled the orders for plant and goods that were sent out to the lands in which they worked, because the management was centred here; and because the management was centred here, and was in touch with British manufacturers, British exports were assisted—transfer of the undertaking meant a local Board of Directors, and gradually the certainty of orders for Britain was weakened.

SIR JAMES CRICHTON-BROWNE'S SPEECH

Proposing the re-election of the Duke of Atholl as a Director, Sir James Crichton-Browne, M.D., LL.D., F.R.S., said the Duke brought to the service of the Board an honoured name, a large and varied knowledge of affairs, and a genial personality, and one further very special qualification for the post in a confirmed faith in Bovril.

Viscount Hailsham seconded the resolution which was carried.

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